

**FOOTBALL FEATURE
ON FELIX ROSMAN**

**FOOTBALL FOCUS
ON TONY OULIARIS**

LONDON CALLING

goal!

Weekly

Season 5: Issue 4 Monday 16th March 2009



Photo: Peter Kakalias

OH MY JOSH!

**10 MAN KNIGHTS PUT
CANNONS TO THE SWORD
FOR A SECOND WEEK IN A ROW**

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CAPTAIN COURAGEOUS

Rosman Reigns As Cannons' King

FELIX Rosman is the rock that Oakleigh Cannons build their defence around. He's also one of the most loyal servants ever to wear the club's colours and is in his 10th straight season at Jack Edwards Reserve, a remarkable achievement in modern football.

It's testament to the high regard in which the central defender is held that even leading lights at other clubs readily acknowledge his prowess. Take his former coach Stuart Munro, now the boss at Dandenong Thunder, for example.

"When I took over as (Oakleigh) coach Felix was the captain and I didn't know much about him. I was happy to let him continue as captain and as time went by he impressed me greatly and I gained great respect for him," said Munro.

"His commitment to the team and to the club is unbelievable and he's clearly one of the best central defenders in Premier League. Frankly I'm surprised that he never played in the national league. He'd be one of the first players you'd sign if you were at another club.

"He's a terrific big lad, a lovely person. He's just happy to play for the jersey and he's never chased the money."

Oakleigh will honour Rosman's service but there will be no razzmatazz about the event, no advertising, and it will likely be by invitation only, a quiet affair in keeping with their captain's demeanour.

Rosman set out on his journey to Jack Edwards Reserve as a 10-year-old in the East Richmond juniors where he was coached by Tom Harrison, who assembled a talented group of players that included goalkeeper Peter Zois.

Ange Koutos was player-coach of East Richmond's seniors and Rosman made his debut as a 17-year-old.

The following season Koutos was gone, replaced by Len McKendry who had a profound effect upon the young defender.

"Len's probably the best coach I've ever had. I was just 18 then and I count myself very lucky to have been coached by him at that age," said Rosman.

"He taught all of us good habits and he's the most organised coach I've ever worked under. Everyone knew exactly what their job was. He turned average players into good players."

But injury struck when Rosman was 19. He tore a medial ligament and was out of action for six months.

By now the central defender had decided that he needed to test himself at a higher level. Trials with Heidelberg and Bentleigh Greens were arranged but nothing came of them. That's when the Cannons stepped in. The club had heard about Rosman and player-coach Aki Alagiozidis gave him a chance.

"It was a huge jump going from Second Division to Premier League and to be honest I was thinking that maybe I wasn't good enough but I was involved in most of the games.

"That was the year we got relegated and at the end of the season Melbourne Knights called me up for a trial. I trained there for a month then I



A player you can bank on - Felix Rosman prior to taking the field against the Melbourne Knights on Friday night. Photo: PETER KAKALIAS

jarred my knee and was out for six weeks. I just didn't go back."

In 2001, Oakleigh finished third in First Division behind Whittlesea and Fitzroy City. The Cannons were keen to reclaim Premier League status but off-field turmoil in 2002 led to three different coaches and an eighth-placed finish.

"We had McKendry for four games, Jimmy Pyrgolios for three games then George Slifkas took over as player-coach for the rest of the season. That was the year we lost seven games in a row. That's never happened before or since."

But the club's fortunes changed dramatically with the appointment of Michael Chatzitrifonas for the 2003 season. Newcomers to the squad included Alex Kiratzoglou and Jim Latinopoulos and Oakleigh clinched the Division One championship by a margin of five points.

"That was the closest knit group of players I've ever played with. Other teams may have had better players but we had a great team spirit. It was special."

The following year the national league disbanded

and suddenly clubs were falling over each other in the race to sign up the available talent. By the middle of the 2004 season Rosman was one of only three or four players still at the club who had won the title the previous year.

Although the Cannons bowed out of the finals in straight sets, they had cemented their return to Victoria's elite with a second-placed finish behind Green Gully.

More coaching turmoil followed in 2005 when Chatzitrifonas was sacked after a 2-1 loss to Altona Magic and replaced by Munro. Oakleigh finished fifth that year but the following season must go down as one of the finest in the club's history.

"That 06 team was the best team I've been involved with at Oakleigh. We had Pelikan, Goutzioulis, Kovacic ... we had a lot of good players in that side and we were so mentally strong. I think we were 1-0 down in something like 14 or 15 games but came back and won. I think we only lost two league games that season."

Oakleigh finished on top of the table by a whop-

ping 12-point margin but flopped once more in the finals.

The club kept building a reputation as one of the Premier League powerhouses with a fifth-placed finish in 2007 but its finals hoodoo continued to haunt it.

"We lost Pelikan to Melbourne Knights that season and we had some younger players come into the side. I think we ran out of steam heading into the finals. We just didn't have fresh legs at the end of that year.

"Last year was a really tough year for us. We had the second best defence in the league but if you look at goals scored then we were down there with the relegation teams. We missed out on the finals by two points but we really weren't good enough."

John Anastasiadis, who took over the coaching reins from Munro at the end of last season, hasn't made the best of starts this season but Rosman is confident that, given time, things will improve.

"John's brought in a few new ideas and brought in new players and we're still getting used to each other.

"Our minimum aim is to make the finals and then take it from there but we've got to start taking maximum points from our home games. We've lost our last two at home and I honestly can't remember the last time that happened here."

Rosman is in the final year of a two-year contract and while Oakleigh remains ambitious he'll want to be involved.

"The club keeps moving forward and that's an important thing for me. We've got a finals series to make and anything's possible once you get there. From my experience I believe a good finals campaign comes down to a number of variables, things like injuries and sharpness and how fresh you are."

And it also comes down to the quality of the playing surface.

"The quality of the grounds is a big thing for me and it's getting harder and harder to keep going. I started off with studs but even with the blades my feet are blistered the next day. Maybe I'm just getting older."

Is that a hint that retirement may be on the agenda?

"If I couldn't get into the first team at my age then I wouldn't be content to sit on the bench. And I don't want to leave the club on bad terms. You'd like to leave before you get booted out. I guess every player would like it that way."

But there's another factor that could influence Rosman's longevity as an Oakleigh player - his wife Kylie is expecting their first child.

Rosman will sit down at the end of the season and weigh up what is in his and his family's best interests.

But you can bank on one thing. If loyalty and ability can be passed on genetically, Oakleigh Football Operations Manager Aki Ionnas will soon be standing outside a hospital birth suite with a pre-contract agreement in his hand.

By Craig MacKenzie

Finger On The Pulse Dept.



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Front Cover

Knights' Josh Groenwald reels away after scoring a super 25yard free-kick against the Cannons on Friday night. Photo: Peter Kakalias.



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TRANSFER TRIBULATION

State Clubs Left To Slug It Out

If you were fortunate enough to catch The World Game on SBS the previous Sunday afternoon, you would have stumbled upon a feature on the Australian state leagues and their place in the national football hierarchy.

To be honest, the four minutes dedicated to the topic barely scratched the surface on some of the burning issues prevalent in this level of competition. However, one topic sparked debate more than any other, the issue of transfer fees between Australian clubs.

It is important that some clarity is offered when it comes to two key terms which are often circulated at the heart of this discussion.

Transfer Fees: In simple terms, transfer fees only ever apply to the movement of professional players between clubs. However, as with every regulation, there are some important caveats.

Firstly, and with great reference to the Bosman ruling of 1995, no club can seek a transfer fee for a professional player who is out-of-contract. In other words, as a professional player, you reach the end of your contract term, and you have the freedom to sign with another club.

Secondly, and with reference to the National Registration Regulations issued by FFA in 2007, a club can seek a transfer fee for a professional player anywhere up to a maximum of 50% of their base salary for the remaining term of their contract. Confused? Here is an example.

Let's assume Josip Skoko returns to Victoria and signs with Dandenong Thunder for a total salary of \$100,000 over 2 years. If at the end of the first year of his contract, Skoko and Thunder agree to part ways, Thunder can demand \$25,000 as a transfer fee (i.e. 50% of his total salary owing, which would naturally be \$50,000 with half of his contract term remaining). If you're still confused, then I suggest that becoming a player agent is a career choice you would best avoid.

Training Compensation: A FIFA directive, adopted by FFA in 2007, training compensation is due when a player signs a professional contract for the first time or transfers to a professional club overseas (all before the age of 23). Training compensation is paid by the club who signs the player, and is distributed to all clubs who have had a hand in the player's development since the age of 12.

If a player's first contract is in the Premier League, the amount payable is \$3,000. If a player's first contract is in the A-League, the amount payable is \$5,000. Furthermore, if a player's second contract involves a move up the chain from the Premier League to the A-League, another \$3,000 is payable. If a player moves overseas, the training compensation will reflect the standard of competition they are playing in. For instance, if moving to a top tier league in Europe, the amount payable could be in the hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Where the respective state league clubs have been most critical of the national governing body is in their assertion that A-League clubs are poaching their talented players for nothing, which is far from the truth in most instances.

The effect of the Bosman ruling has essentially placed much of the power of player movement back into the hands of the individual. In essence, when a player reaches the end of their contract, they are no longer bound to that club. In part, this explains the amount of movement at VPL level in recent seasons, particularly to promoted clubs who are



James Robinson, Sash Ognosovski and Rodrigo Vargas are just a few players who have risen from the ranks of the VPL to the A-league. But are our local clubs making the most of the current transfer system?

cached up and are determined to secure the state's best talent to avoid relegation.

Unless clubs can convince players to sign long-term deals (3 to 5 years), the likelihood of significant transfer fees exchanged between Australian clubs is unlikely at best. In large part, the movement of much of the nation's domestic talent to the A-League has occurred when contracts have lapsed, and in effect, transfer fees are not relevant.

In order to make the most of the domestic transfer system, clubs must ensure that they tie up their best talent to substantial long-term contracts. The Skoko example is simplified to provide a clear illustration, yet the likelihood is that the best paid player in the VPL would be lucky to earn half that much in reality. In Australia, the maximum contract term a player and club can commit to is 5 years. Given the figures on offer, the best domestic transfer a VPL club can target would be in the vicinity of \$30,000 at best, assuming they can secure a player to a long term deal.

'To ensure their long term viability, VPL clubs must seriously target their resources towards acquiring the benefits of training compensation'

Of course, the stipulation regarding maximum transfer fees does not apply when players move abroad, and it may explain why several A-League clubs have tasted success with the European and Asian transfer markets. Con Constantine, inaugural owner of Newcastle United, has benefited significantly from shipping players abroad in recent months, estimated to have pocketed over \$1 million in transfer fees from a market which is not confined by domestic regulations. However, to expect that state league clubs could exploit the overseas transfer market given their lack of commercial exposure, is significantly overstating the local game. The best talent at Melbourne Victory will always have more opportunity of getting spotted by international scouts than the best talent at Green Gully.

The impact of young talent moving abroad has been complimented by the introduction of training compensation, now in its third year of operation at domestic level. The movement of players such as Matthew Spiranovic (Nurnberg, Germany) and Matthew Park (Hearts, Scotland) would attract significant payouts given the status of the competitions they play in.

With every club involved in their development sharing the spoils, everything would seem to paint a perfect picture. However, it's at domestic level where those benefits are inconsistent with the regulations that are in place.

Given the structure of Victoria's highest competition, it is the VPL clubs who are actually bearing much of the burden in paying out training compensation, as more often than not, the first contract that a player signs is invariably with a VPL club. In the event that a VPL club has poached a young striker from another club, then they are parting with \$3,000 before the player has even set foot on the park.

This encourages VPL clubs to nurture their own talent (as they would basically see a full return of that \$3,000), and those with successful youth development systems will reap the rewards not only for players that have come through to their own senior ranks, but have moved on to join other clubs. However, it also encourages clubs to ship their young talent offshore, as the benefits on offer are far greater than anything that a move to the VPL or A-League will provide.

Conversely, the return of overseas based Australian players to their homeland can often result in training compensation amounts in the tens of thousands, hardly the sort of funds that VPL and A-League clubs are prepared to outlay for the procurement of established professionals, yet alone aspiring young talent looking to re-establish their careers in a growing domestic league.

The respective amounts of \$5,000 (A-League) and \$3,000 (State League) are hardly enough to encourage youth development at clubs who have previously opted for the transfer market as a roadmap to success. Those figures alone suggest that VPL clubs are at 60% of the fiscal capacity of the A-League, which is a complete misinterpretation of the viability of the nation's domestic state leagues. FFA must re-examine the amount which A-League clubs are forced to contribute – a simple increase to \$10,000 would be far more consistent with the model that is currently in place.

To ensure their long term viability, VPL clubs must seriously target their resources towards acquiring the benefits of training compensation, particularly if FFA reviews its current ceiling for the distribution of compensation for domestic player movements. This will go a long way to assisting in the development of the missing link in the all important player development pathway.

By Tony Persoglia

Football Insight



VPL STANDINGS



ROUND 4 FIXTURES

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
1. Richmond	3	2	1	0	4	0	7
2. Green Gully Cavaliers	3	2	1	0	4	0	7
3. Dandenong Thunder	3	2	1	0	2	0	7
4. Melbourne Knights	3	2	0	1	3	2	6
5. Altona Magic	2	1	1	0	1	0	4
6. South Melbourne	3	1	0	2	7	3	3
7. Oakleigh Cannons	3	1	0	2	4	3	3
8. Hume City	3	1	0	2	3	2	3
9. Heidelberg Utd	2	1	0	1	2	4	3
10. Sunshine Georgies	2	1	0	1	1	3	3
11. Preston Lions	2	0	0	2	2	9	0
12. Whittlesea Zebras	3	0	0	3	0	7	0

Richmond Eagles
v
Sunshine Georgies
Kevin Bartlett Res
Fri 20 Mar KO8:30PM

Hume City
v
Heidelberg Utd
Brdmdws Valley Park
Sat 21 Mar KO 4PM

Dandenong Thunder
v
Altona Magic
George Andrews Res
Sat 21 Mar KO 6PM

Preston Lions
v
Green Gully
BT Connor Reserve
Sun 22 Mar KO 5PM

South Melbourne
v
Melbourne Knights
Bob Jane Stdm
Sun 22 Mar KO 6PM

Whittlesea Zebras
v
Oakleigh Cannons
Epping Soccer Stdm
Mon 23 Mar KO 8:30PM



VPL RESULTS

Oakleigh Cannons 0 Melbourne Knights 1
Green Gully Cavaliers 0 Dandenong Thunder 0
Altona Magic 0 Richmond 0
Hume City 3 Whittlesea Zebras 0
Preston Lions 1 South Melbourne 7
Heidelberg United v Sunshine Georgies (Playing tonight)



VPL UNDER 21 DETAILS

Oakleigh Cannons 0 Melbourne Knights 1, Green Gully Cavaliers 3 Dandenong Thunder 1, Altona Magic 0 Richmond 2,

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
Melbourne Knights	4	3	0	1	4	3	9
V.I.S	2	2	0	0	5	1	6
Richmond	3	2	0	1	4	2	6
Altona Magic	3	2	0	1	3	2	6
Heidelberg Utd	2	1	1	0	3	1	4
Oakleigh Cannons	3	1	1	1	3	3	4
Green Gully Cavaliers	3	1	1	1	3	4	4
Whittlesea Zebras	2	1	0	1	3	1	3
South Melbourne	2	1	0	1	3	2	3
Hume City	2	1	0	1	2	3	3
Sunshine Georgies	2	0	1	1	1	2	1
Preston Lions	3	0	0	3	1	5	0
Dandenong Thunder	3	0	0	3	2	8	0



ANDREW FISHER'S KISS OF DEATH - Round 4

RICHMOND V SUNSHINE
Fri 20th Mar, 8:30pm Kevin Bartlett Res
Richmond will be full of confidence coming into this match against Sunshine, not only have they kept three successive clean sheets in a row, they also hold an impressive record against the Georgies. Sunshine will have a short four day recovery after they play Heidelberg on Monday night.
HOME WIN

Last 5 Meetings: Rich 8-0 Sun (07), Sun 1-1 Rich (07), Rich 1-0 Sun (06), Sun 2-2 Rich (06), Sun 1-3 Rich (04)

HUME CITY V HEIDELBERG
Sat 21st Mar, 3:00pm B'dows Valley Park
Hume City recorded their first points in convincing style. They will be determined to continue winning ways when they came up against a tough Heidelberg outfit. The visitors did the double over Hume last season.
SCORE DRAW

Last 5 Meetings: Heid 2-0 Hume (08), Hume 0-2 Heid (08), Hume 1-0 Heid (04), Heid 2-1 Hume (04), Heid 1-1 Hume (03)

DANDENONG V ALTONA MAGIC
Sat 21st Mar, 6:00pm George Andrews Res
Last years reigning champions face what is expected to be the toughest road trip in the league. Neither side has conceded a goal

thus far, and a goalless draw is unexpected. Altona will have a tough task at George Andrews Reserve, which is bound to be pack to its rafters. I'll stick my neck out here and back the Thunder at home.
HOME WIN

Last 5 Meetings: Altona 1-1 Dand (01), Dand 1-5 Altona (01), Dand 4-2 Altona (99), Altona 5-1 Dand (99), Altona 6-1 Dand (98)

PRESTON V GREEN GULLY
Sun 22nd Mar, 5:00pm BT Connor Res
Green Gully can get back on the winners list when they face the hapless Lions on Sunday. The visitors should be to strong for a Lions outfit that was humiliated in front of their loyal supporters last week. The less said about the Lions the better.
AWAY WIN

Last 5 Meetings: Prest 3-2 Gully (08), Gully 4-0 Prest (08), Prest 2-1 Gully (07), Gully 2-3 Prest (07), Prest 2-1 Gully (06)

SOUTH MELB V MELB KNIGHTS
Sun 22nd Mar, 6:00pm Bob Jane Stadium
South Melbourne finally found their scoring boots scoring an impressive seven goals. They have managed to go from bottom of the scorers chart to top in just one game. They now face traditional rivals Melbourne Knights in a blockbuster at Bob Jane. The Knights showed they are still

a force to be reckoned with defeating the Cannons with only ten men.
SCORE DRAW

Last 5 Meetings: South 2-2 Knights (08), Knights 2-0 South (08), Knights 0-2 South (07), South 0-3 Knights (07), Knights 0-2 South (06)

WHITTLESEA V OAKLEIGH
Mon 23rd Mar, 8.30pm Epping Stadium
A win is vital for both teams in this important clash between the Zebras and Cannons. Despite only being round 4, the Zebra's have yet to register a single point or goal this season. Things must change rapidly before they find themselves deep in relegation trouble. The Cannons will be scathing after succumbing to consecutive one-nil defeats at home.
AWAY WIN

Last 5 Meetings: Whit 1-0 Oak (08), Oak 3-0 Whit (08), Whit 3-1 Oak (07), Oak 0-1 Whit (07), Oak 0-1 Whit (06)

For those who like a flutter on the English betting sites, my outside bet would be Dandenong upsetting Altona Magic at home. This week's safe bet: Green Gully to beat Preston. Remember bet responsibly.

By Andrew Fisher
Kiss of Death



Calling all sharp-shooters! Get your best shooting boots on because thanks to our friends at Errea, the Top Scorer of this season's VPL will receive a \$500 gift voucher. Since 1988 Errea have strived to lead in the creation, development and manufacture of the most advanced technical sportswear and accessories for specialising in football. The company offers quality products such as Italian Made football uniforms and accessories, and sponsors clubs of the calibre of Genoa, Middlesbrough, Parma and many clubs in Australia. Good luck to all the punters, and remember 'keepers, you have been warned!

RECORDS INTACT

Heavyweights Avoid Defeat At Paisley Park



ALTONA
MAGIC

0 - 0

RICHMOND
EAGLES



Altona Magic hosted Richmond in a clash of unbeaten teams at Paisley Park on Saturday.

The reigning champions had defeated Hume City to start the season and were level when the lights went out against Preston Lions a week earlier. Concerns about the lighting saw the game with Richmond brought forward to a 5.00 p.m. kick-off. The Eagles were flying high after wins over Whittlesea Zebras and Melbourne Knights.

With the Magic defending the Refinery End, the game got off to a tepid start. New Richmond striker Nick Robinson was booked after nine minutes, making his presence known with some physical challenges. Dimitri Tsiaras shot well wide when picking up the ball after a Richie Cardozo free-kick had been headed away from the penalty area. Pece Cergovski shot high and wide after eighteen minutes from just inside the penalty area after Carl Recchia initiated a swift counter attack following a corner kick. A good run from Recchia down the right saw his cross flicked on to the far post where Andrew Viola cleared the danger for the Eagles.

After twenty minutes Michael Catalano broke free in the middle of the park and released Robinson on his right. Robinson got past a defender and crossed the ball square across goal, Nick Kalambokis just failing to meet it. A foul on Robinson saw Tsiaras also miss connecting with the ball, as he dived to get on the end of a Cardozo free-kick. Phillip Riccobene denied

Kalambokis with well-timed slide tackle after Tsiaras had played him in behind the defender. Coming up to the half hour mark Recchia started another dangerous counter, combining with Michael Cucija to shift the ball from right to left, hitting Cergovski at the top of the penalty area. Cergovski laid the ball wider to Adam Fadljevic who had a shot saved by Peter Zois.

There was a curious incident when Steve Laurie went to ground after an aerial challenge with Robinson, ending up on his knees and trying to headbutt the Richmond player in the buttocks. With ten minutes left in the half a Robinson header into the box was chipped over from the left by Kalambokis to Cardozo who took a little too long to shoot from seven yards allowing Riccobene to clear off the line. A shot on the run from Cardozo from thirty yards took a deflection and bounced just wide of the post, leaving the game still scoreless at the break.

Pece Siveski went into the book shortly after play resumed, fouling Tsiaras on the halfway line. A foul by Laurie on Robinson gave Richmond a free-kick which ended up bouncing across the goalmouth, Erhan Karahan just missing it with a dive and Catalano unable to keep it in play at the far post. A high ball from Kalambokis saw Robinson slip in between defenders and keeper, appealing for a handball by Recchia as his shot was blocked and then cleared. At a corner the ball to the feet of Nick Kalmar ten yards out, but his shot was blocked

as soon as it left his boot.

In the sixtieth minute a wayward back-pass from Doug Mladenovic saw Robinson pick-up the ball and round Nik Roganovic before the keeper pulled him down. To the surprise of many the referee only booked Roganovic, and Richmond were left with nothing from the almost certain goalcoring opportunity when Cardozo's free-kick from the edge of the box flew just over the crossbar.

A cross from Robinson saw Catalano also appeal for a handball as he was blocked when trying to shoot, before Danny Black was forced to clear a threatening cross from Kalmar. Miffit Bojku shot wide from twelve yards at a corner as Altona began to lift. Riccobene crossed to Cergovski at the far post, the shot missing the mark with Zois in trouble. A corner from Mladenovic fell to Cucija who shot wide. Catalano shot wide from thirty yards after a run across the middle and then Recchia chipped up a cleared corner and volleyed well over the goal from forty yards out.

The rain of earlier in the day returned, but it was the increasingly heavy winds that were making play difficult in the latter stages. Zois saved a header from Cergovski. It was the Eagles keeper who shone in the fading light in the final five minutes, blocking a shot from Mladenovic who had made a great run into the box before a defender cleared. In the eighty-ninth minute a ball from Slave Bozinosvki was flicked on at the top of the box by Cucija for Cergos-

vki to run onto. His drive nearly beat Zois, the keeper having to dive over the ball as it headed for the line after his first effort to stop it took the sting out of it.

The final whistle came with the game still scoreless, leaving both sides with their unbeaten records intact. Altona will become the first side to travel to George Andrews Reserve this season for a clash with Dandenong Thunder. Richmond will next host Sunshine Georgies on Friday night.

Altona Magic: N.Roganovic, S.Laurie, C.Recchia, M.Curcija, P.Siveski, K.Taseski (D.Mladenovic 45'), A.Fadljevic (M.Bojku 45'), P.Cergovski, P.Riccobene, S.Bozinovski, N.Kalmar.

Yellow Cards: Siveski 48' Roganovic 60' Bozinovski
Red Cards: None

Richmond: P.Zois, D.Black, E.Karahan, T.Antoniadis, S.McCluskey, D.Tsiaras, R.Cardozo, N.Kalambokis (E.Sivic 91'), M.Catalano, N.Robinson, A.Viola.

Yellow Cards: Robinson 9'
Red Cards: None

Man of the Match: Peter Zois (Richmond)
Venue: Paisley Park
Crowd: 350

By Mark Boric

Photos by Daniel Flis



Richmond's Michael Catalano eludes the Magic's Pece Siveski and weaves his way through the midfield.



Magic's Steve Laurie gets close up with Richmond's Nick Robinson

SOUTH IN SEVENTH HEAVEN

Lions Mauled In Own Den



PRESTON
LIONS

1 - 7

SOUTH
MELBOURNE



Preston started the great the best possible way by scoring in the 1st minute when Dolevski latched onto a loose ball in the penalty to sent BT Connor Reserve in raptures, unfortunately this was all the celebrating that the home team and fans were going to do.

Sth Melb then took total control of the game with some strong work ethic from defence all the way to attack.

Preston tried valiantly to hold Sth Melb off but it was inevitable and a matter of time before the Lions cracked as Sth's domination was going to yield dividends.

Damir Salcin was the only thing between Sth Melb and the goal as he courageously saved a 10 metre shot from Youssef.

O'dor should have done better 15 minutes in when he headed over the bar from a free kick from the right with only the keeper to beat.

Preston was finding it very hard to

contain a rampant Sth Melb outfit as they chased shadows trying to get a hold of the ball, and the few occasions that they won it had problems keeping it for any length of time which in itself was a frustration not helping them.

The inevitable happened in the 27th minute when O'Dor converted the constant pressure applied by Sth Melb to equalise. The goal knocked the stuffing out of the Lions and Nunes should have made the score in favour of Sth but he blasted well over the bar.

Sth Melb pressure on Preston was now relentless and it is quite amazing how they failed to score in the 37th minute as Preston was in total disarray but somehow managed to clear the ball when it looked like Sth Melb would score.

Zoric was the next culprit to miss a glorious chance from only 12 metres out as he blasted his shot well over the bar with only Salcin to beat.

To clearly show Sth Melb's supe-

riority it took Preston 38 minutes from the time they scored to their next meaningful shot on goal.

Sth made their superiority count when in the 45th minute they scored their second through Youssef from a great 20 metre shot giving Salcin no chance. Salcin kept Preston in the game in injury time as he saved bravely to save Miskas's blushes as he lost the ball in the penalty area.

Da Moraes couldn't finish an exquisite move which saw some great interpassing by Sth Melb, but his effort was just wide of the goal.

Sth Melb then lifted a gear and in particular Zoric who curled a great shot over Salcin in the 55th to give Sth a 2 goal buffer.

Zoric got his 2nd in the 63rd minute after some greater interpassing by the Sth Melb midfield and forward line.

Zoric then turned provider in the 78th minute when his cross from the right was blasted past a helpless Salcin by Sth #

18.

Things got from bad to worse for the Lions as Sth Melb kept up the pressure and were awarded a penalty which Zoric blasted into Salcin but the rebound fell straight to Zoric for his 3rd.

Zoric then completed his Man of the Match performance by scoring the goal of the game with a scorcher from 25 metres out in the 88th minute.

Sth Melb Demolish Preston Lions 7-1

Crowd: 1,500 unofficial

Dolevski (PL)

O'Dor (Sth)

Zoric 4 (Sth)

Youseff (Sth)

18 (Sth)

By Nome Risteski

Photos by Nome Risteski



Soth Melbourne's Goran Zoric completes his hat trick in the 7-1 drubbing at Connor Reserve. Inset: Steven O'Dor gets on the scoresheet.

HUME NAVIGATES FIRST WIN

Zebras Yet To Kick Start Their Season



HUME
CITY

3 - 0

WHITTLESEA
ZEBRAS



After two disappointing weeks in the Victorian Premier League Hume City FC have won their first game of the season with a comfortable 3 nil win over Whittlesea Zebras, who continue to struggle.

Coming into this game both teams were winless and another loss for either team would've been a major disappointment. With Hume City having big expectations after signing key figures such as Isyan Erdogan, Toni Sterjovski, Jonathon Munoz and Zoran Petrevski another loss would've made a lot of people around the club disappointed.

Andy Vlahos saved those blushes by assuring Hume City fans with a man of match performance after he scored the opener and assisted the other two goals.

During the first 15 minutes of play Andy Vlahos and Toni Sterjovski were causing Whittlesea issues on the wings as they were continuously finding room and providing crosses but Hume City were failing to capitalize.

Tex Apostolikas had a great op-

portunity to punish Hume City for wasting their chances as a deflected through ball came straight to his feet, but then failed to get the ball past Lou Acevski as he pulled of a good save.

Hume City were continuing to control the play but were still failing to find the finishing touch as Brendan Beni had two opportunities to give Hume the lead in the first half.

Lou Acevski was called into the action again as Josip Kozic's free kick got over the wall and forced a full stretched Lou into a great save.

With minutes remaining before the first half ended Andy Vlahos finally got the ball into the back of the net.

Jason Davidson provided a long diagonal ball, found Zoran Petrevski on the 18 yard box who headed it backwards where it was met by Ramazan Savran and he provided the short cross and found Andy Vlahos who volleyed the ball in leaving Kenny Gerohristodoulou with no hope.

It was the same story in the 2nd half with Hume controlling the play and Whittlesea failing to complete a passage of play.

After only scoring one goal in the Victorian Premier League last season Zoran Petrovski was still goalless for the 2009 season but 10 minutes into the 2nd half a trademark header found the back of the net.

Andy Vlahos received a hopeful cross then turned provider as he found Zoran Petrovski all alone and he easily headed the ball in.

Hume City put the icing on the cake on the 65th minute mark. Substitute Caner Ucarli played a one two with Andy Vlahos and from a slight angle placed the ball into the back of the net.

Zoran Petrevski had an opportunity to get his double after Jonathon Munoz provided a pinpoint cross along the floor to Zoran who hit it first time but a good save from Kenny Gerohristodoulou forced it into a corner.

With minutes remaining Hume City were still looking for goals but thanks to Kenny the final score was left at 3 nil with a convincing win to Hume City F.C

Hume City:

L.Acevski, T.Baser, J.Davidson, S.Pir, A.Vlahos (N.Harrhy 72'), I.Erdogan, A.Apozo, B.Beni, T.Sterjovski (J.Munoz 67'), R.Savran (C.Ucarli 61'), Z.Petrevski

Yellow Cards: Tansel Baser 37', Brendan Beni 45+1'

Red Cards: None

Goals: Andy Vlahos 41', Zoran Petrevski 54', Caner Ucarli 65'

Whittlesea Zebras:

K. Gerohristodoulou, H.D'Agostino, S.Kovacevic, R.Antoniadis, S.Martin, M.Vazzocchi (E.Garcia 57'), S.Piorkowski (G.Lombardo 63'), J.Kozic (N.Sarbin 90'), B.Vassallo, T.Apostolikas, M.Kuna

Yellow Cards: Hayden D'Agostino 42'

Red Cards: None

Goals: None

By Tugrul Ozdemir

Photos by John Punshon



Zebras keeper Kenny Gerohristodoulou gets his hands to the ball under pressure from Zoran Petrevski (Hume City)



Marko Kuna (Zebras) tackles Brendan Beni, while Brandon Vassallo follows up

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MENS & JUNIORS



GOING BACK TO BACK!

Tonight at Olympic Village, KO 8.30pm

Monday Night sees Round 3 of the VPL completed at the Olympic Village where fans can expect to be treated to very interesting clash between two sides eager to pull back-to-back victories.

Both teams come into the contest having been soundly beaten in week one of the season but both bounced back with victories by one goal to nil in the second round of the season. Both will be looking for a positive result to begin positioning themselves within the league at this stage.

The start of the season has seen the home side Heidelberg take on two of its fellow Greek backed clubs in Oakleigh and South Melbourne respectively, on the road in the first weeks of the season. The first week saw one of the championship favourites in Oakleigh clinically dismantle the Bergers who had no answer to John Anastasiadis' men and they left Jack Edwards reserve the wrong side of a 4-1 score line. This left coach George Katsakis with much to think about going into what is one of the traditional Derby games in Victoria against South Melbourne at Bob Jane stadium. The one goal to nil victory was a triumph for Katsakis and his men, who had endured some tough pre-season clashes already in the Hellenic Cup, but when the chips were on the line and points were to be had he found something and they recorded what is sure to be a moral boosting victory.

Heidelberg have quality laced throughout their team with the likes of Anthony Magnacca, Eric Vassiliadis, Bobby Petta and Marino Gasparis to name but a few, the surprise packet of the season however so far has to be Osagie Ederaro who has scored both of the Bergers two goals to date and who has started the season off with a bang. Katsakis and his men will be looking to continue their momentum at home against the new boys from Sunshine way.

For the Sunshine Georgies they received a harsh welcome back to the top flight in the first week with a three nil beating at the hands of last season's minor premiers



The Georgies visit Olympic Village tonight and hope to continue its promising return to the VPL against Heidelberg Warriors.

and bitter rivals Green Gully. For seventy odd minutes they had matched Gully and clawed and fought for parity though neither team had really dominated the other. However in the top flight you make mistakes, you get punished and Green Gully were able to exploit a number of 'Cross errors. In the second week Sunshine bought Victorian Premier League football back to Chaplin reserve and they clawed and fought and absorbed a lot of pressure from Hume City themselves chasing their first win but thanks to a Kris Konstas strike the Georgies opened their account for the season.

The Georgies have made many changes from the side which dominated the 2008 State League Division One and this was necessary to inject some top flight experience into the side. Andy O'Dell recruited well bring in some English imports as well as picking up players like Nick Schwal, John Sapasovski and Campbell Banks all who had top flight experience. There were signs during the Hume game, and to a lesser degree the Gully game, that the side is beginning to gel and that the Georgies could be a reasonable chance to avoid the drop in 2008.

The game is at Olympic Village Catalina Street, Heidelberg West Melways 19 D11 with the reserves kicking off at 6:30pm and the main game at 8:30pm.

Following this game the Georgies have a quick turnaround because they visit Richmond just four days later on Friday night the 20th March, whilst the Bergers travel to Broadmeadows Valley Park to lock horns with Hume City on the Saturday the 21st March.

By Reuben Schembri

Photos by Daniel Flis

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Les Shorrock's award winning picture of Peter Blasby. Les Shorrock collection, Deakin University Library

CHARMING THE FAITHFUL

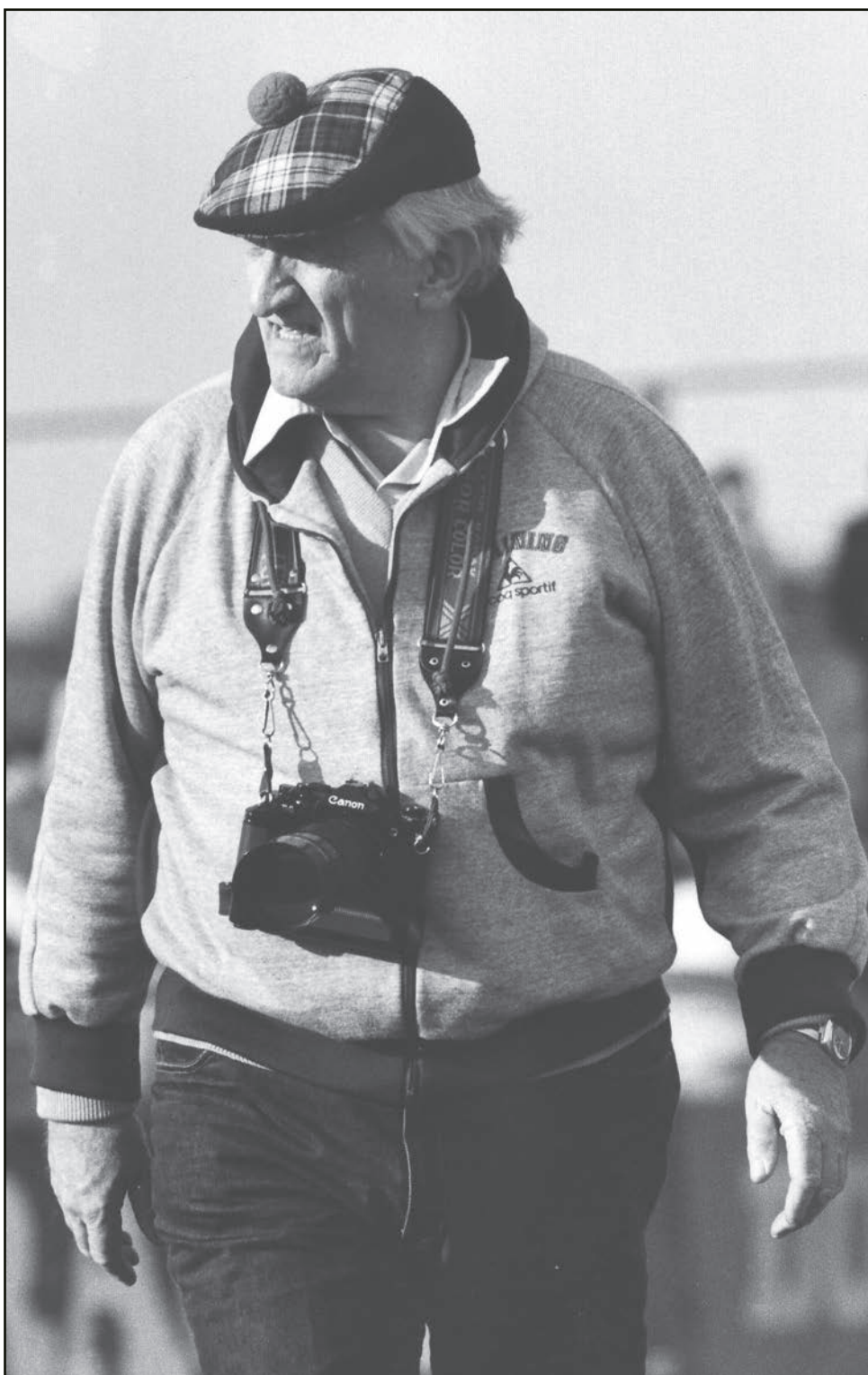
The Prince of Football Photography

Virtually every Blast from the Past is enlivened by some of the best action and still photographs of Australian football taken by a real icon of the sport, Les Shorrock.

Now living happily in retirement, Les arrived from England in January 1958 to be greeted by a Melbourne heatwave. He and wife Eileen and son Brian, and with another baby on the way, went through the migrant camp in Brooklyn. He worked as a manual labour like many skilled migrants, and then had a variety of occupations. After a couple of years the Shorrocks returned to England, but by May 1961 they realised they had made a mistake and came back to Melbourne.

Having played football in England and followed Stoke City, it was perhaps surprising, but quite typical of English migrants, that he did not initially become involved in the game in Australia. In 1970 a friend persuaded him to go to the World Cup in Mexico, which rekindled his interest and on his return another mate, Scott Frew, persuaded him to join the committee of Sunshine City. In 1974 City won promotion to the State League, but the Shorrocks then moved to Brighton which was closer to their home in St Kilda. Very soon he took up writing about the game and 'Shorrock's Soccer Snippets' kept the fans informed. He then took over from Jim Barker as the soccer correspondent for the Sunday Press. He also did work on radio and was for a while on the Victorian Soccer Federation's Board of Management. In 1976 the indefatigable Laurie Schwab recruited him to be his offside on Soccer Action. Because the photographs they were getting for the paper were very poor, Les began experimenting himself and eventually learned to develop and print his own work.

As a casual on Soccer Action, Les held down a variety of other jobs to pay the bills, despite the fact that the paper took up a huge proportion of his week. Craig McKenzie, whom Les rates as one of the best journalists he has come across, joined the paper in 1979 and now, of course, still



Les Shorrock, as the fans and players saw him, eyes on the ball, camera at the ready. Photo: Les Shorrock collection, Deakin University Library

contributes to Goal Weekly. Les's photographing skill improved to the point where he won the National Soccer Photographer of the Year award in 1982 for a brilliant picture of Peter Blasby making a flying save. He also won the same award in 1984 and 1985. Though Australia did not make it to the World Cup in Spain in 1982, Les did and was the official photographer for the New Zealand Herald as a result of work he had done during the qualifying competition. When the Age decided to close Soccer Action in 1987, Les was determined to launch a paper of his own. Taking great risks and against the best advice of many of his friends he and three colleagues launched Soccer Star, which ran for two years and gave an opportunity for Rob Nelson and myself among others to write on the game in Victoria. Needless to say, Rob's piece was called Nelson's Column.

Les continued to work for the Age, both doing the real estate pictures and copy and producing a series of superb football photographs every week. His tartan bonnet and tall, slightly stooped figure was a fixture at football matches until his knees gave out and he retired in 1995.

A feisty and independent spirit he survived at least three bad car accidents, including an encounter with the Geelong flyer in which he was seriously injured. His contribution to the game as a photographer and journalist is second to none and the collection of his work which he has deposited at Deakin University's Special Collections at its Waterfront campus in Geelong is an unrivalled source for the history of the game. Virtually every player who has turned out for the leading clubs in Victoria and Australia will have a Les Shorrock picture in his photograph album. His autobiography, *My Charmed Life*, gives a wonderful account of the sheer range of activities in which he was involved in the United Kingdom and Australia.

Words by Roy Hay

Photos sourced by Roy Hay



Elias Denoudis (Neos Kosmos), Laurie Schwab (The Age), Leo Anezakis, Craig McKenzie (Soccer Action). Photo: Les Shorrock collection, Deakin University Library



Les Shorrock, John McKinnon, Bobby McLachlan. Photo: Les Shorrock collection, Deakin University Library

COUCH
POTATOThis week's football
television & radio listings.

FOXTEL CUP

The Victorian Football Show
Every Wednesday C31 8pmThe Green Gully Football Show
Every Saturday C31 10.30am

EPL

Sat Mar 21 Portsmouth v Everton
11.40 pm Fox Sports 2
Sun Mar 22 Tottenham v Chelsea
1.55 am Fox Sports 2
Sun Mar 22 Blackburn v West Ham
1.55 am Viewers Choice
Sun Mar 22 West Brom v Bolton
1.55 am Viewers Choice
Sun Mar 22 Stoke v Middlesbrough
1.55 am Viewers Choice
Sun Mar 22 Fulham v Manchester United
1.55 am Viewers Choice
Sun Mar 22 Newcastle v Arsenal
4.25 am Fox Sports 2
Mon Mar 23 Wigan v Hull
12.25 am Fox Sports 1
Mon Mar 23 Liverpool v Aston Villa
2.55 am Fox Sports 1

ASIAN CHAMPIONS LEAGUE
Matchday 2

Tues Mar 17 Newcastle v Ulsan Hyundai
7.30 pm Fox Sports 1

Wed Mar 18 Tianjai Teda v Central Coast
10.55 pm Fox Sports 1

SETANTA
SPORTS

Monday 16th March
3:30pm Serie A Siena vs AC Milan

Tuesday 17th March
1:30am MUTV: EPL Man Utd vs Liverpool
5:30am EPL Reserves Tottenham Reserves vs
Chelsea Reserves LIVE
12:30pm Serie A Sampdoria vs Roma
4:15pm Russia Spartak Moscow vs Zenit St. Peters

Wednesday 18th March
6:00am FA Cup QF Arsenal vs Hull City LIVE

Thursday 19th March
1:15am Barca TV: La Liga Almeida vs Barcelona
6:45am Scottish FA Cup Qtr Final Replay Aberdeen vs
Dunfermline LIVE
12:00pm Copa Libertad Guarani vs Boca Jun LIVE

Friday 20th March
2:00am Chelsea TV: EPL Chelsea vs Man City
6:30am UEFA Cup Galatasaray vs Hamburg LIVE
11:00am UEFA Cup Aalborg vs Man City
4:15pm Blue Square Kettering Town vs Oxford Utd

Saturday 21st March
4:45am Bundesliga B Monch vs Bochum LIVE
2:00pm FA Youth Cup Semi-Final TBC
10:00pm Russian Dinamo Moscow vs Khimki LIVE

Sunday 22nd March
5:15pm SPL Kilmarnock vs Motherwell
7:00pm SPL Rangers vs Hearts

Monday 23rd March
00:00am SPL Dundee Utd vs Celtic LIVE
4:45am Serie A Chievo vs Palermo
6:30am Serie A Napoli vs AC Milan LIVE
3:30pm Eredivisie AZ vs Feyenoord

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WAG OF THE WEEK



Kira Eggers Age: 33

Insignificant other: Everton Midfielder, Thomas Gravesen

FOOTBALL
QUOTES

'If you can't stand the heat in the dress-
ing room, get out of the kitchen '
- TERRY VENABLES

'The spirit he has shown has been sec-
ond to none.' - TERRY VENABLES on
Terry Fenwick's drink-driving charge

'No-one hands you cups on a plate'
- TERRY MCDERMOTT

'Last night, we were the best team on
the day.' - ROY AITKEN

'Hodde hasn't been the Hodde we
know. Neither has Robson.'
- RON GREENWOOD

'I do want to play the short ball and I do
want to play the long ball. I think long
and short balls is what football is all
about' - BOBBY ROBSON

'Our first goal was pure textile.'
- JOHN LAMBIE

'A lot of hard work went into this defeat.'
- MALCOLM ALLISON

'It was a game we should have won.
We lost it because we thought we were
going to win it. But then again, I thought
that there was no way we were going to
get a result there.' - JACK CHARLTON

'The first 90 minutes are the most im-
portant.' - BOBBY ROBSON

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STATE LEAGUE SE2 - SEASON 2009



Round 1

Fri 27 Mar KO 8:30PM Doncaster Rovers v Knox City/Anderson Park
Sat 28 Mar KO 3:00PM Dandenong City v Malvern City Frank Holohan Res
Sat 28 Mar KO 3:00PM Eastern Lions v Diamond Valley Utd Gardiners Creek Res
Sat 28 Mar KO 3:00PM Casey Comets v Heatherton Utd Comets Stdm
Sat 28 Mar KO 3:00PM Morwell Pegasus v Kingston City Ronald Res
Sat 28 Mar KO 7:00PM Port Melbourne v South Springvale SS Anderson Res

Round 2

Fri 3 Apr KO 8:30PM Port Melbourne v Malvern City SS Anderson Res
Sat 4 Apr KO 3:00PM Heatherton Utd v Morwell Pegasus Bosnia & Herzeg Centre
Sat 4 Apr KO 3:00PM Eastern Lions v Casey Comets Gardiners Creek Res
Sat 4 Apr KO 3:00PM Dandenong City v Diamond Valley Utd Frank Holohan Res
Sat 4 Apr KO 3:00PM South Springvale v Knox City Warner Res
Mon 6 Apr KO 8:30PM Kingston City v Doncaster Rovers The Grange Res

Round 3

Fri 17 Apr KO 8:30PM Doncaster Rovers v Heatherton Utd Anderson Park
Sat 18 Apr KO 3:00PM Malvern City v South Springvale Kooyong Res No. 3
Sat 18 Apr KO 3:00PM Diamond Valley Utd v Port Melbourne DISC
Sat 18 Apr KO 3:00PM Casey Comets v Dandenong City Comets Stdm
Sat 18 Apr KO 3:00PM Morwell Pegasus v Eastern Lions Ronald Res
Mon 20 Apr KO 8:30PM Kingston City v Knox City The Grange Res

Round 4

Fri 24 Apr KO 8:30PM Port Melbourne v Casey Comets SS Anderson Res
Sat 25 Apr KO 3:00PM Heatherton Utd v Kingston City Bosnia & Herzeg Centre
Sat 25 Apr KO 3:00PM Eastern Lions v Doncaster Rovers Gardiners Creek Res
Sat 25 Apr KO 3:00PM Dandenong City v Morwell Pegasus Frank Holohan Res
Sat 25 Apr KO 3:00PM Knox City v Malvern City Egan Lee Res
Sat 25 Apr KO 3:00PM South Springvale v Diamond Valley Utd Warner Res

Round 5

Fri 1 May KO 8:30PM Doncaster Rovers v Dandenong City/Anderson Park
Sat 2 May KO 3:00PM Malvern City v Diamond Valley Utd Kooyong Res No. 3
Sat 2 May KO 3:00PM Casey Comets v South Springvale Comets Stdm
Sat 2 May KO 3:00PM Morwell Pegasus v Port Melbourne Ronald Res
Sat 2 May KO 3:00PM Heatherton Utd v Knox City Bosnia & Herzeg Centre
Mon 4 May KO 8:30PM Kingston City v Eastern Lions The Grange Res

Round 6

Fri 8 May KO 8:30PM Port Melbourne v Doncaster Rovers SS Anderson Res
Sat 9 May KO 3:00PM Eastern Lions v Heatherton Utd Gardiners Creek Res
Sat 9 May KO 3:00PM Dandenong City v Kingston City Frank Holohan Res
Sat 9 May KO 3:00PM Knox City v Diamond Valley Utd Egan Lee Res
Sat 9 May KO 3:00PM South Springvale v Morwell Pegasus Warner Res
Sat 9 May KO 3:00PM Malvern City v Casey Comets Kooyong Res No. 3

Round 7

Fri 15 May KO 8:30PM Doncaster Rovers v South Springvale Anderson Park
Sat 16 May KO 3:00PM Casey Comets v Diamond Valley Utd Comets Stdm
Sat 16 May KO 3:00PM Morwell Pegasus v Malvern City Ronald Res
Sat 16 May KO 3:00PM Heatherton Utd v Dandenong City Bosnia & Herzeg Centre
Sat 16 May KO 3:00PM Eastern Lions v Knox City Gardiners Creek Res
Mon 18 May KO 8:30PM Kingston City v Port Melbourne The Grange Res

Round 8

Fri 22 May KO 8:30PM Port Melbourne v Heatherton Utd SS Anderson Res
Sat 23 May KO 3:00PM Dandenong City v Eastern Lions Frank Holohan Res
Sat 23 May KO 3:00PM Knox City v Casey Comets Egan Lee Res
Sat 23 May KO 3:00PM South Springvale v Kingston City Warner Res
Sat 23 May KO 3:00PM Malvern City v Doncaster Rovers Kooyong Res No. 3
Sat 23 May KO 3:00PM Diamond Valley Utd v Morwell Pegasus Partington Flats

Round 9

Fri 29 May KO 8:30PM Doncaster Rovers v Diamond Valley Utd Anderson Park
Sat 30 May KO 3:00PM Morwell Pegasus v Casey Comets Ronald Res
Sat 30 May KO 3:00PM Heatherton Utd v South Springvale Bosnia & Herzeg Cntr
Sat 30 May KO 3:00PM Eastern Lions v Port Melbourne Gardiners Creek Res
Sat 30 May KO 3:00PM Dandenong City v Knox City Frank Holohan Res
Mon 1 Jun KO 8:30PM Kingston City v Malvern City The Grange Res

Round 10

Fri 12 Jun KO 8:30PM Port Melbourne v Dandenong City SS Anderson Res
Sat 13 Jun KO 3:00PM Morwell Pegasus v Knox City Ronald Res
Sat 13 Jun KO 3:00PM Heatherton Utd v Malvern City Bosnia & Herzeg Centre
Sat 13 Jun KO 3:00PM Diamond Valley Utd v Kingston City Partington Flats
Sat 13 Jun KO 3:00PM Casey Comets v Doncaster Rovers Comets Stdm
Sat 13 Jun KO 3:00PM South Springvale v Eastern Lions Warner Res

Round 11

Fri 19 Jun KO 8:30PM Doncaster Rovers v Morwell Pegasus Anderson Park
Sat 20 Jun KO 3:00PM Heatherton Utd v Diamond Valley Utd Bosnia & Herzeg Ctr
Sat 20 Jun KO 3:00PM Eastern Lions v Malvern City Gardiners Creek Res
Sat 20 Jun KO 3:00PM Dandenong City v South Springvale Frank Holohan Res
Sat 20 Jun KO 3:00PM Knox City v Port Melbourne Egan Lee Res
Sat 20 Jun KO 5:00PM Kingston City v Casey Comets The Grange Res

Round 12

Sat 27 Jun KO 3:00PM South Springvale v Port Melbourne Warner Res
Sat 27 Jun KO 3:00PM Malvern City v Diamond Valley Utd Kooyong Res No. 3
Sat 27 Jun KO 3:00PM Diamond Valley Utd v Eastern Lions Partington Flats
Sat 27 Jun KO 3:00PM Heatherton Utd v Casey Comets Bosnia & Herzeg Centre
Sat 27 Jun KO 3:00PM Knox City v Doncaster Rovers Egan Lee Res
Sat 27 Jun KO 5:00PM Kingston City v Morwell Pegasus The Grange Res

Round 13

Fri 3 Jul KO 8:30PM Doncaster Rovers v Kingston City/Anderson Park
Sat 4 Jul KO 3:00PM Morwell Pegasus v Heatherton Utd Ronald Res
Sat 4 Jul KO 3:00PM Casey Comets v Eastern Lions Comets Stdm
Sat 4 Jul KO 3:00PM Diamond Valley Utd v Dandenong City Partington Flats
Sat 4 Jul KO 3:00PM Knox City v South Springvale Egan Lee Res
Sat 4 Jul KO 3:00PM Malvern City v Port Melbourne Kooyong Res No. 3

Round 14

Sat 11 Jul KO 3:00PM South Springvale v Malvern City Warner Res
Sat 11 Jul KO 3:00PM Port Melbourne v Diamond Valley Utd SS Anderson Res
Sat 11 Jul KO 3:00PM Dandenong City v Casey Comets Frank Holohan Res
Sat 11 Jul KO 3:00PM Eastern Lions v Morwell Pegasus Gardiners Creek Res
Sat 11 Jul KO 3:00PM Heatherton Utd v Doncaster Rovers Bosnia & Herzeg Ctr
Sat 11 Jul KO 3:00PM Knox City v Kingston City Egan Lee Res

Round 15

Fri 17 Jul KO 8:30PM Doncaster Rovers v Eastern Lions Anderson Park
Sat 18 Jul KO 3:00PM Morwell Pegasus v Dandenong City Ronald Res
Sat 18 Jul KO 3:00PM Malvern City v Knox City Kooyong Res No. 3
Sat 18 Jul KO 3:00PM Casey Comets v Port Melbourne Comets Stdm
Sat 18 Jul KO 3:00PM Diamond Valley Utd v South Springvale Partington Flats
Sat 18 Jul KO 5:00PM Kingston City v Heatherton Utd The Grange Res

Round 16

Sat 25 Jul KO 3:00PM Diamond Valley Utd v Malvern City Partington Flats
Sat 25 Jul KO 3:00PM South Springvale v Casey Comets Warner Res
Sat 25 Jul KO 3:00PM Port Melbourne v Morwell Pegasus SS Anderson Res
Sat 25 Jul KO 3:00PM Dandenong City v Doncaster Rovers Frank Holohan Res
Sat 25 Jul KO 3:00PM Eastern Lions v Kingston City Gardiners Creek Res
Sat 25 Jul KO 3:00PM Knox City v Heatherton Utd Egan Lee Res

Round 17

Fri 31 Jul KO 8:30PM Doncaster Rovers v Port Melbourne Anderson Park
Sat 1 Aug KO 3:00PM Heatherton Utd v Eastern Lions Bosnia & Herzeg Centre
Sat 1 Aug KO 3:00PM Diamond Valley Utd v Knox City Partington Flats
Sat 1 Aug KO 3:00PM Morwell Pegasus v South Springvale Ronald Res
Sat 1 Aug KO 3:00PM Casey Comets v Malvern City Comets Stdm
Sat 1 Aug KO 5:00PM Kingston City v Dandenong City The Grange Res

Round 18

Sat 8 Aug KO 3:00PM Diamond Valley Utd v Casey Comets Partington Flats
Sat 8 Aug KO 3:00PM Malvern City v Morwell Pegasus Kooyong Res No. 3
Sat 8 Aug KO 3:00PM South Springvale v Doncaster Rovers Warner Res
Sat 8 Aug KO 3:00PM Dandenong City v Heatherton Utd Frank Holohan Res
Sat 8 Aug KO 3:00PM Knox City v Eastern Lions Egan Lee Res
Sat 8 Aug KO 5:00PM Port Melbourne v Kingston City SS Anderson Res

Round 19

Fri 14 Aug KO 8:30PM Doncaster Rovers v Malvern City Anderson Park
Sat 15 Aug KO 3:00PM Eastern Lions v Dandenong City Gardiners Creek Res
Sat 15 Aug KO 3:00PM Casey Comets v Knox City Comets Stdm
Sat 15 Aug KO 3:00PM Heatherton Utd v Port Melbourne Bosnia & Herzeg Centre
Sat 15 Aug KO 3:00PM Morwell Pegasus v Diamond Valley Utd Ronald Res
Sat 15 Aug KO 5:00PM Kingston City v South Springvale The Grange Res

Round 20

Sat 22 Aug KO 3:00PM Casey Comets v Morwell Pegasus Comets Stdm
Sat 22 Aug KO 3:00PM Diamond Valley Utd v Doncaster Rovers Partington Flats
Sat 22 Aug KO 3:00PM Malvern City v Kingston City Kooyong Res No. 3
Sat 22 Aug KO 3:00PM South Springvale v Heatherton Utd Warner Res
Sat 22 Aug KO 3:00PM Knox City v Dandenong City Egan Lee Res
Sat 22 Aug KO 6:00PM Port Melbourne v Eastern Lions SS Anderson Res

Round 21

Fri 28 Aug KO 8:30PM Doncaster Rovers v Casey Comets Anderson Park
Sat 29 Aug KO 3:00PM Knox City v Morwell Pegasus Egan Lee Res
Sat 29 Aug KO 3:00PM Dandenong City v Port Melbourne Frank Holohan Res
Sat 29 Aug KO 3:00PM Malvern City v Heatherton Utd Kooyong Res No. 3
Sat 29 Aug KO 3:00PM Eastern Lions v South Springvale Gardiners Creek Res
Sat 29 Aug KO 5:00PM Kingston City v Diamond Valley Utd The Grange Res

Round 22

Sat 5 Sep KO 3:00PM Morwell Pegasus v Doncaster Rovers Ronald Res
Sat 5 Sep KO 3:00PM Casey Comets v Kingston City Comets Stdm
Sat 5 Sep KO 3:00PM Diamond Valley Utd v Heatherton Utd Partington Flats
Sat 5 Sep KO 3:00PM Malvern City v Eastern Lions Kooyong Res No. 3
Sat 5 Sep KO 3:00PM South Springvale v Dandenong City Warner Res
Sat 5 Sep KO 3:00PM Port Melbourne v Knox City SS Anderson Res

Draw Notes:

CATCH-UP ROUNDS - 6th June 20KO & 12 September 20KO - Clubs will be notified by FFV of matches to be played on this weekend during the course of the season.

CLUBS ARE ADVISED TO VERIFY THEIR FIXTURES REGULARLY VIA RESULTS VAULT AND THE FFV WEBSITE FOR ANY CHANGES THROUGHOUT THE COURSE OF THE SEASON.

Action from last season's State League SE2 match between Knox City and Peninsula Strikers. PHOTO: Joseph Sirucka

GULLY HALT DANDY'S THUNDER

Injuries Mount As Vargas Joins List



GREEN GULLY
CAVALIERS

0 - 0

DANDENONG
THUNDER



Green Gully have retained their share in the lead position of the 2009 Victorian Premier League after a scoreless draw with Dandenong Thunder.

Having gone into the game against a full-strength Dandenong Thunder outfit, without Steven Burton and Joel Nikolic, The Cavaliers were further handicapped when after 25 minutes of play Andy Vargas had to be substituted for the home team's 3rd casualty in as many weeks.

Despite the setbacks, and the mighty challenge from a Dandenong Thunder team on a complete roll, Green Gully managed to stay undefeated and goalkeeper Steven Tilovski held a 3rd successive clean sheet.

It was the Cavaliers who started the match with more opportunities, John Adam blasted a shot from just outside the Thunder penalty box against the Dandenong crossbar, later in the first half, substitute Diogo Ferreira, playing his first official league match for Green Gully, played

wallpass with Daniel White, and White's point blank shot on goal, was saved by the advancing Thunder keeper Stuart Webster.

Much like the game away to Whittlesea last weekend, the Green Gully's opponents played much more spirited 2nd half. Dandenong striker Hamlet Armenian gave Matthew Sanders the run around all 2nd half, and Steven Tilovski was made to work for his 3 game running clean sheet record this season. Late on in the match, Gully coach David Winton had to think outside the box, with his limited resources, and opted to play defender Kole Delev up forward as target man with the ability to control, hold and setup attacking moves for the home team. Kristijan Ivesic also came on late in the game, and had the chance to steal a late winner, his shot saved by Stuart Webster, from the rebound, Aziz Behich look like he would score, but referee Perry Mur ignored the apparent trip up of Aziz Behich in the penalty box, just before a shot could be made. After the match,

David Winton rued his current injury woes, and re-iterated his call that every senior squad member would play their part in 2009.

The under 21's got their first win of the season, an impressive 3-1 scoreline was much appreciated by coach Tom Cutajar.

Match Details:

Green Gully:

#23 Steven Tilovski, #9 Daniel White, #8 Aziz Behich, #4 Dean Fak, #7 Jeffrey Fleming, #10 John Adam, #11 Pablo Cardozo, #12 Matthew Sanders, #16 Mile Medjedovic, #17 Andy Vargas, #14 Ryan Ollerton

Subs:

#00 Patric Ndongo, #6 Kole Delev, #19 Diogo Ferreira, #2 Kristijan Ivesic, #5 Cameron Drake

Dandenong Thunder:

#1 Stuart Webster, #2 Jack Hingert, #14 Alon Wilford, #6 Levent Osman, #17 Fatim Ibrahim, #7 Hamlet Armenian, #8 Sam Bailey, #4 Marcus Stergiopoulos, #16 Ryan Davidson, #9 Veton Korcaleski, #22 Colin Quirk

Subs:

#10 Joey Diorio, #26 Yeha Dimasi, #5 Noel Bahnsen, #12 Mohamed Alkasaram, #16 Shane Reschepi

Best:

3. John Adam
2. Hamlet Armenian
1. Stuart Webster

Crowd: 1000

venue: Green Gully Reserve

Highlights: Green Gully Show - Saturday March 21 10:30am Channel 31

By Markian Jaworsky

Photos by Steve Starek



Green Gully's John Adam and a cast of Thunder fans watch in anticipation as Levent Osman gets a leg up.



Ryan Ollerton wins the aerial dual.



Colin Quirk puts the Gully defence under pressure.

OH MY JOSH!

10 Man Knights Silence Cannons



OAKLEIGH
CANNONS

0 - 1

MELBOURNE
KNIGHTS



Joshua Groenewald made himself an instant hero, after his twenty-five yard free-kick was blasted into the top corner of the goal, to secure a vital 1-0 win for the Melbourne Knights against Oakleigh Cannons, at Jack Edwards Reserve on Friday night.

The win was made all the more impressive considering that the visitors were down to 10 men for the majority of the match, after Frank Lagana was sent off on the half hour mark.

Both sides had injury headaches coming into this match, with Oakleigh spearhead Ricky Diaco and Knights midfielder Cameron Watson both unavailable. However the Cannons were able to hand Ivan Franjic his full debut, ironically against the side he left last season.

A healthy crowd witnessed a cagey start from both sides, with the only real chances coming from set pieces. Knights' right back Jamie Cumming caused the Cannons some early scares with some long throw's that would have impressed Rory Delap. Whilst at the other end the height and strength of Jerry Karpeh was keeping the Knights defence very busy.

The game took an unexpected twist on the half-hour mark. Frank Lagana and Ivan Franjic were involved in an off the ball incident which led to Lagana receiving his marching orders.

Oakleigh with the extra man ad-

vantage, immediately went onto the front foot and were denied a penalty in the 36th minute for what looked like a hand ball in the box. A minute later Cannon's midfielder Bonnie Obradovic tried his luck from distance forcing a good save from Savas Ozdemir. Trent Waterson unleashed a powerful drive from outside the box, managing to only find the side-netting as the Knights defence restricted the Cannons to long shots at goal.

The Knights looked dangerous on the counter attack, flamboyant playmaker Mate Dugandzic skipped past his marker and set up James Sherman who forced a good save from Cagalj in the Oakleigh goal.

Oakleigh suffered a major blow just minutes from half time when Jerry Karpeh was forced from the field with injury and replaced with Billy Gasparinatos. The substitute almost made an immediate impact, Billy Damianos set up the chance that saw Gasparinatos effort kept out by the busy Ozdemir. The visitors were relieved to go into half time holding onto a nil-nil score line.

The Cannon's began the second half as they finished the first, but once again they were met with a resilient Knights defence. Clearly frustrated at not being able to find an avenue to goal the home side were again restricted to long shots that rarely troubled Ozdemir in the Knights goal.

It was the Knights however that looked the more dangerous on the break, Mate Dugandzic was taking on defenders at will and won a free-kick in the 62nd minute that would ultimately turn the game on its head. With free-kick specialist Waterson injured, up stepped Joshua Groenewald unleashing a rocket from twenty-five yards into the top corner for an early goal of the season contender.

From there on in, the Knights comfortably held on to their advantage despite their man disadvantage, and at times could have even extended the lead.

Knights captain Craig Elvin was all smiles after the game; 'At half time Chris Taylor told us we still could win this, we came out with real belief and got the result we deserved, we have one of the youngest squads in the league, but the character and team spirit really showed tonight'

Next week the Knights take on old foe's South Melbourne at Bob Jane Stadium, Kick off is Sunday 6:00pm. Whilst the Cannons will enjoy a nine day break before taking on Whittlesea Zebra's at Epping Stadium on next Monday night, Kick off is at 8:30pm.

MATCH STATS

SHOTS: OAK 7 MK 10

TARGET: OAK 4 MK 4

CORNERS: OAK 3 MK 4

Oakleigh Cannons: Cagalj, Rosman, S. Drakos, A. Drakos (Mur 80'), I. Franjic, Matkovic (Kioussis 62'), Obdarovic, Rojas, Waterson, Damianos, Karpeh (Gasparinatos 44').

Not Used: Anastasiadis, Wynne.

Yellow Cards: Karpeh 21'

Red Cards: None

Melbourne Knights: Ozdemir, Cumming (P. Franjic 87'), Fitzgerald, Grbesa, Elvin, Kiratzoglou, Lagana, Dugandzic, Sherman, Groenewald (Hatzimouratis 89'), Draper (Beckit 80').

Not Used: Loncaric, La Verde.

Goal Scorers: J. Groenewald 62'.

Yellow Cards: Sherman 11', Kiratzoglou 83', Hatzimouratis 90'.

Red Cards: Lagana 30'.

Man of Match: J. Groenewald (MK)

Crowd: Approx 1500 @ Jack Edwards Reserve.

By Andrew Fisher

Photos by Peter Kakalias



The Knights hit the high notes in the dressing rooms lead by chairman Matt Tomas.



The Knights are ecstatic



Lagana's a goner!



Josh Groenewald's superbly taken free-kick hits the top corner and leaves Cannons keeper Adrian Cagalj well and truly beaten.

MacKenzie At Large

An Occasional Offering from Craig MacKenzie



Play-offs back on agenda?

FOOTBALL Federation Victoria competitions manager Mariela Dos Santos has hinted at the possible return of the play-off system involving the third-last State One side fighting for its status against the winner of a play-off between State Two runners-up in the North-West and South-East leagues.

“We decided not to do it this year but it’s something we’ll reconsider later on in the season. It’s certainly not dead and buried,” said Dos Santos.

“We’re always looking to improve the competition and now that the two-up, two-down promotion–relegation issue has been resolved in Premier League we’ll have a good look at the (play-off) situation down the track.”

Let’s hope Dos Santos and her co-workers look long and hard at re-introducing what adds great interest to the State Leagues given that unlike their Premier League cousins they don’t have the glitz and glamour of a finals series.

Over the years I’ve gone to these play-off games at the home grounds of Eastern Lions, Port Melbourne and Bulleen and while the football often isn’t pretty it’s certainly gritty. With so much at stake the intensity of the contest can make for gripping viewing and there have been some good crowd attendances at these games.

I’ve long thought it unfair that only State Two champions are given the opportunity to advance to State One and when the play-off system was introduced some years back it gave clubs at that level of competition added incentive to have a crack at promotion.

Finishing second in your league is a grand achievement but the current set-up does not acknowledge that at State Two level.

Comets target top four

CASEY Comets boss Tony Saunders is still in the hunt for a striker and a central defender but is quietly pleased with the pre-season progress of his senior squad.

“We started off our preparation a bit slowly as we had six or seven injuries but we had a few guys back the other week and we beat Knox 4–1. Granted, they had a few guys out but it was a good hit-out for our lads,” said Saunders.

The senior coach of the State Two South-East outfit pinpointed former Parkmore, Oakleigh Cannons, Richmond and Springvale White Eagles player Arndt Balint as an important signing and the hard-working central midfielder looks very composed on the ball.

Comets have also snapped up central defender Daniel Motta; right-sided midfielder Marcus Brownlie and striker Steve Vernon from Peninsula Strikers; and goalkeeper Phil Wiess, who has returned to the club after winning Berwick Kings’ best and fairest award last season.

“Daniel is a hard-working, strong defender and we’re hoping for big things from Marcus who is quick and looks really good on the ball. Stevie has been impressive during pre-season games and his work rate off the ball is phenomenal while the club is delighted to welcome back Phil,” Saunders added.

Delighted indeed after the gaping hole left by the departure of Robbie Acs to Bentleigh Greens reportedly for double the money he got at Comets Stadium.

Another loss is that of former Pines striker



Seaford teenager Craig Locke (left) and Peninsula Strikers newcomer Nagus Henry. Photo: DARRYL KENNEDY.

Colin Stewart who has switched codes and now puts his oval ball skills to use at a local footy club.

The bulk of the senior and reserves squads and some of the club’s under-18s travelled to Rawson Village in Gippsland on Friday for a training camp, returning on Sunday night. Saunders was guarded about the club’s prospects this season knowing that the word around the traps is that Doncaster Rovers are the team to beat in the championship race. But despite trying to downplay expectations he nevertheless has his eyes fixed firmly on a position well up the ladder.

“If we can get into a top four position by June then we can take it from there,” was all that could be prized from him.

And you can read into that that if the club is a title challenger at that time it will look to further strengthen the squad in an effort to mount a firm promotion push.

www.howluckyarewe.com.au
GEORGE HUGHES and Dougie Chisholm were in pensive moods last week after training as they sat back in the comfort of Peninsula Strikers social rooms reflecting on the wonders of modern technology.

The coaches of the State Three South-East outfit were thinking how lucky they were to sign two good English players thanks to the club’s website and the miracle that is email. And a third English newcomer was training with Strikers’ Bayside team when Hughes was alerted to his talents and strolled over to have a look, shortly after inviting him to train with the first team squad.

The duo that contacted the club by email were Nagus Henry and Steve Baxter who both played non-league football in England and their clearances have been arranged.

Baxter, who already has been nicknamed “Peter Crouch”, looms as a near perfect foil up front for Henry who is a flying machine as a couple of Frankston Pines defenders discovered in a recent practice match that Strikers won 2–1.

The other Englishman is 22-year-old midfielder Reiss “Chico” Kingsley, who played with Westhamians FC in the 2007–08 season in the

Baliston Essex Olympian League.

And judging by Kingsley’s pen portrait on the Westhamians website he’s a bit of a character so he should have no problem fitting in with the Strikers.

His most memorable moment at Westhamians was when he asked the whole team to call him “Chico” because his mum calls him it and he describes himself as “a great dancer, a young Patrick Swayze”.

Okay, now that we’ve done a number on Kingsley let’s move on to the other newcomers.

Seb Lorenzo can play sweeper or in central midfield. He’s recovered from a bad knee injury that threatened to put him out of the game and is an ex-Springvale White Eagles player.



Reiss “Chico” Kingsley.

Kamil Szwed is a striker signed from Provisional League club Dandenong White Star (no doubt hoping to put last year’s relegation nightmare behind him) and goalkeeper Ash Hupe is back after a couple of seasons overseas.

The main losses from last year’s squad have been captain and star striker Murat Demirkol who has joined Turkish outfit Southern

Stars, goalkeeper Adam Asanovski who has switched to South Springvale, midfielder Damien Nadjner who is rumoured to be joining Doveton, fellow midfielder Chaz Di Petta who has retired and Brownlie and Vernon have joined the Comets.

Strikers are keen to sign ex-National League star Brian MacNicol and plan to tap in to his experience and leadership qualities.

“We’ve got a fairly young squad and we need a good talker out on the park. Brian’s been great with the younger players and we hope that we can reach agreement with him,” said Hughes.

Another on the club’s radar is midfielder Stefan Rudski, who was reported in this column last week as having joined Division Three rival Berwick City. But Strikers have other ideas and were chasing his signature as we went to press.

A few Heart murmurs

WHAT’S in a name? Just a lazy \$73 mil if you’re Peter Sidwell who heads the Melbourne Heart consortium expected to soon be granted an A-League licence.

That’s the wealth guesstimate published earlier this year in FourFourTwo magazine which ranked the successful businessman and racing identity in 16th spot in its 2009 Australian Football Rich List.

And for those of you (obviously not Tommy Mitchell at the Pines) troubled by the club’s proposed name possible legal issues make it likely that another name for the new outfit will emerge.

Thanks to Michael Lynch and The Age newspaper we know some of the men in Sidwell’s corner and they make for impressive reading. There’s a heady mix of business, entertainment and football acumen with the football side taken care of via Michael Catalano, former Melbourne Victory shareholder and ex-chairman of Essendon Royals; Manny Galanos, former FFV president and chairman; and Michael Lynn, who played and coached at the highest level in this state and is highly regarded as a business administrator.

Sidwell has had meetings with City of Casey chief executive officer Mike Tyler and it’s no secret that the consortium is keen to have an administrative and training base in Victoria’s largest and one of Australia’s fastest-growing municipalities.

The word on the street is that the consortium isn’t cooling its heels waiting for Football Federation Australia’s nod of approval.

Names such as Maclean, Macleod, Kalitzki and Laverty have been bandied about in relation to roles with the newcomer.

That’s aside from the playing angle where Viduka, Skoko, Bresciano and Grella are the names still on some people’s lips.

It’s been put to me that a primary focus of assembling the club’s first ever squad will be to sign Victorian-bred players and we can only hope that’s what transpires. If it does it’s going to be a potent marketing tool.

And if Lynn has any say in it put your money on the Elland Road tragic pushing for a former Leeds United manager to be named head coach.

Okay, I’m teasing but it conjures up an interesting image. It’s not hard to imagine Lynn bouncing a football and humming “One, Two, Three O’Leary ...” or the old Everton chant “He’s fat, he’s round, he’s worth a million pound, Peter Reid ... Peter Reid ...”



BOO'S WORLD

With Mark Boric



It's always a good week when you don't have to watch Pim Verbeek's A-League Socceroos attempt to play football.

When local football makes the news pages of the Herald-Sun, it is usually for the wrong reasons. As was the case during the week when articles appeared linking the Altona Magic president, Melissa Fischer-Massa, to alleged neglect of clients and misuse of Commonwealth funds in her nursing homes. There is nothing funny about the elderly being mistreated, I spent half an hour trying to think of something but everything is in pretty poor taste. Possibly like the cheap food they may have been served up in order to save costs to fund A-League license bids.

Asian Champions League football was back during the week, Newcastle Jets playing against a Chinese team with more Grif-fiths brothers than they had themselves. The Chinese fans can spot a donkey a mile away, and made plenty of noise whenever Nikolai Topor Stanley was on the ball. The

game was what you would expect from wooden spooners appearing in a "Champions" League, Beijing winning 2-0.

Defenders and goalkeepers are having the upper hand in the VPL so far this season. Like water in the Thompson Dam, the goals are drying up. Could this be a year the Top Goalscorer fails to reach double figures?

From the FFA press release regarding Adelaide United and Melbourne Victory being fined for melees during the Grand Final: "The FFA ruled Adelaide assistant coach Phil Stubbins had not breached the code of conduct in relation to statements he made towards referee Matthew Breeze at halftime." Is that because you can't be punished for calling someone a disgrace if indeed they are a disgrace? Well done Stubby on exploiting this loophole.

Whilst back on the Grand Final, the half-time kids game I was witness to contained some players who thought it was acceptable to stop the ball with your hands before playing on. I doesn't matter if they

were seven or eight years old, that is not an excuse. Only kids of a sufficient standard should be for such a showpiece.

The say the AFL's NAB Cup competition is a glorified practise match but the fans who staged a massive brawl must have been taking it pretty seriously. What will happen when the "real stuff" kicks-off?

Was anyone else concerned by the image of Stevie Gerrard running up the tv camera and kissing it whilst celebrating a goal against Manchester United? Was he trying to kiss the viewers at home? I was worried he was going to plant a Liverpool Kiss, like the kind given to uncooperative DJ's in pubs.

Welcome rain once again during the week will hopefully improve the state of some of the grounds. It shows how severe the drought has been that we get excited by a bit of rain nowadays as if we were Sydneysiders who had just discovered it was raining men.



No jacket required? No encores please either. Did Steve Gerrard really play Phil Collins in the dressing room to pump himself up before the match against Man U?



KATSA'S KORNER

With George Katsamboukas

Up and coming Coaches and those are not so up and coming, but have been around the traps longer that I have been smoking W N Fields...

Are you lost for words before a big match as to how to get the best from your players?

Look no further for help, as our National Coach, Pim Verbeek has found the solution.

Right before the Asia Cup Qualifying match against Kuwait, who by the way were 96 positions lower than the Socceroos in the World Rankings, Super Coach Verbeek came out in the media and labelled the A-League, and it's players as being sub standard.

To add to this master stroke, pardon the pun, he labelled Ernie's dynamic duo, Thompson and Alsopp's recent performance at International Level as being "absolutely hopeless"

But wait, there's more...

He then picked the team to play against Kuwait exclusively with A-League Players. End result, and one that reminds me of the dark years of the 80's and 90's was a very sad end with a 1-0 loss at Home against Kuwait.

It then begs the following question;

The powerbrokers who run the FFA and the A-League, who dish out fines to Players and Coach's for the most insignificant comments that may be made before and

after a game, what punishment did they dish out to Super Coach Verbeek?

The answer to that was zero, as these powerbrokers are intimidated by Verbeek because of his overseas credentials, but it's the opposite case with local coach's who are the FFA's Soft Targets.

With the A-League we will stay and with Verbeek's criticism of it. Unfortunately I tend to agree with him, as its standard is below par.

Unless we get in overseas coaches, this situation will not improve, as the guys in charge of the A-League teams at the moment do not poses any real overseas coaching experience.

Their experience has been obtained here at local level, and when their players then step up to World Stage, they are not up to scratch!

Back to the local scene, where the Scorer has sensed that he will soon be posting the first and maybe second wicket for the year, as a few clubs starts to the Season has been about as successful as my attempts to replace J Walker with Ice Tea.

The natives are starting to get restless, and one thing that Club Powerbrokers do not cope with very well, is when punters begin to ask questions as to why their team's are not getting results.

Over to the House of Darebin we go, where it has been confirmed that rumours about a possible delay to the kick of the State and Provisional League's is just

that - rumours. Seems that Match 28th is still the start date for the 2009 Season.

Club Powerbrokers are now busily completing their squad lists for season '09, and their biggest challenge is to agree to terms with their players. These negotiations remind me of a scene from Scarface, where the players' demands start high, the Club Powerbrokers start Low, and after a few hours later, they both agree on the amount to be paid.

If the Club Powerbrokers received a bottle of J Walker for every time they heard from Pop Star Players that they always give 100% week in week out, and therefore deserve more money, they would need to hire out a large warehouse to store these bottles in.

The "I always give 100% week in week out" is beginning to sound like a scratched record, because "100% each week" would have their teams stats at the end of the season reading 22 wins 0 Draws 0 Loss.

Over to this week's odd spot we go, where....

A MAN who broke into an adult shop and had sex with blow-up dolls said he had a "pretty healthy" sex life yesterday. After receiving 15 months' probation for his bizarre sex crimes, the punter, told The Cairns Post he had not been in need of sex. "I have a girlfriend and our sex life is pretty good, pretty healthy," he said. Asked if it ever involved blow-up dolls,

the punter answered "no". But he did say his girlfriend thought what he did with the dolls that night was "pretty funny really". "She knows me and knows I'm a just a normal person and that this is something I wouldn't normally do," "But I had quite a few drugs that day: hallucinogens, amphetamines. "I was at a mate's birthday celebration. Ever since this I haven't touched a single thing."

It gets better. The court heard he stole three rubber dolls from the adult shop as well as bottles of lubricant, magazines and other items, taking the dolls outside where he ripped holes in them with his teeth. Unfortunately this punter has broken the golden rule of "if it breathes and has a pulse, its fair game!"

Till next week....

This is Katsa - Just as you've known him.

And remember - Always check for a pulse!

Coach Toll

Last Year	This Year
0 - 3	0 - 3
Outs Weeks	Outs Weeks



TSIGAN'S TSIGAR

With Mike Lilikakis



....And Now For Something Completely Different....NOT!

G'day Goal!Weekly minions, Tsigan 'ere.

It was a fandabidozi experience, a'la Jimmy Hendrix style, to be involved with y'all these past 2 years.

And so, therefore, not to put a dampener on your spirits, I'm here to EXEGETE a little or lot on the trappings of society in General, or Major, or Corporal, depending how your flavour in military terms dictates.

Bob Dylan coined the phrase, (or did he pass the buck?) when he said, "The Times, They are a Changin'"....and t'be shure, t'be shure, we can't have anyone try and stop the future, change the past, or freak the funk on a nasty dunk in the present, even when it's snot Christmas or a Birthday.

Progress is a myriad of wonder...bit meine kleine symptomaniac, (empahasis on maniac) with crackers and cheese, boobies and clackers.

However, we can learn from the past, mistakes and all to whit, providing we WANT to learn from past mistakes.

Living in the past and rocking the Kazbar, counting sheep and cows will fit a bracket providing screws can hold that bracket up.

RESOLUTION

Enough gay banter.

Hath anyone fulfilleth thine own personal Status Quo, as per New Years Resolucion, as per stated in the humanitarian memo dated 02/01/09, section 14(b).03?

I have. Here I is, up up up and a wee in gorgeous Lake Macquarie NSW, the largest salt water lake in Australia, fending off mosquitoes the size of your golf balls, and cockroaches the length, breadth and depth of Gondor.

Thanks Dean fak, for the heads up on that one. If there's nay but ONE persona to have a yarn about concerning cockroaches, speak to the Ubersturmfuhrer Fakmeister, who has seen, experienced and fended off yonder varmants



Tsigan on his way to school

since 1990.

Thankfully there are no saltwater croc's, although the sharks are a tad unsavory to us plebians.

One ought to prefer a bite from a sharpened toothed, voracious marine fish who extorts delicate nyum nyums. He is a right ol' swindler, a Diamantaris of Whitman's sort, an expert in devouring the remnants of any and all who perform at the lowest level.

Again one ought to be preferential in the way they are eaten, neigh Mr. Ed, to be bitten in half rather than get crunched and stored away for an apertif at a later Pedro's Pizza hour, hey? Cows eat hay, and they are a plenty round these parts, depending on your pronunciation.

COWS, SHARKS AND CROC'S.

What has any of this to do with football?

Angles.

Angles meine feine friends und deviant fraulions.

Angles. The tribe that bonked the Saxons into submission, then merged to make the as we know it, Le Whinging Pom.

They went forth and multiplied, settled in Frankston and caused such havoc in Melbourne's South East.

On the subject of Animalia, where the heck do Danes fit in seeing as they are called Great? Alexander was great, but he was a Macedonian.

Can open, worms EVERYWHERE.

Worms have their place in society too or also, depending whether or not you enjoy a good laugh, banter or Jolly Roger. They have wrecked Moore than any wouldst see fit, but Sean's Connery has Moore that placated a match for his hairplugs. Never say never again, unless you really want to say never again.

SHAKE DA ROOM.

Boom boom shakalakalaka boom, and let's walk like an Egyptian, or go back to my room.

Since we're on the topic as such, where have the real current affairer's disappeared to? Those who know me inately or intimately also know, not knew, that I have a lovely bunch of coconuts and I drink them and bang them as I see fit. Since I'm not fit for anything other than eating and sleeping, lets continue.

Sunday nights were a time where families would get together and stab each other with forks whilst watching 60 Minutes. Bombs, Brisques, Bobbies and Brahma Bulls facing off in a squared circle where Bob was your uncle, and Fanny was your aunt.

A healthy debate about the Orange people betwixt family and friends, the members of which would then lick wounds and suck down copious amaount of Baclava in Balaklava. We need more Wild Westerns dammit, as opposed to Soft Eastern sitcoms. Drag the kids off the chatrooms and the mindless C YA L8TRZ guffaw, and back into the kitchen to slap 'em around with the 3 foot spoons which hang just above the stove.

PINING FOR THE F'JORD'S

No, I can't say I miss Melbourne much. Silly roadworks, crazy cops and a gangajang of immigrants who take the American way of life to a new extreme. I do miss my close friends who loved, supported and held me through the



Tsigan feeling Savage not Randy

tough times, though. Their faces, words, kindnesses and plethora of resources which sustained my battered soul and body throughout many a Dire Strait (Thou knowest who thou art) were more than words could say in Extreme.

However, since the discovery of of sacred truths which have been presented to me over the last year, the taste for more of the good stuff has been more than what I could possibly put in jargon. Getting your head around them is quite the arduous, yet satisfying task, considering my brain is infantile as a result of battering it through booze banging and bingeing.

In case you weren't wondering the letter of the day is B, and the lucky number is too low for Zero. Sir Elton John would be proud but since he's a miserable fart, and not that gay, unless you change the term of said word, what could be classified as happy these days? A Gilmour?

On the flipside, there's more than meets the eye, the rumour of my departure to the land of Cornucopia, plenty, Dixie, the fields of cotton not forgotten, look away...there's a barrel with my name on it and man, the surf is up pal. Keanu and Swayze should've come here first. Yea verily, I is studying to be a pastor, nay pasta depending how left of centre your right wing might be.

Dean Martin once crooned, "Everybody Love's Somebody Sometime"....well, how apt to this place of paradise. There's more love here, than at a Nimbin pow-wow. The scope of character and personality within ev-

ery individual is the envy of all plebians in ol' Melbourne town. The walks of life, range and diversity who come together as ONE, to fight the good fight for the same goal is more than remarkable.

JESUS is cool, if you actually take the time to know Him. He knows you, you know.

If a football manager wanted to get tips how to hold a team together, they could do little worse than to spend a week here to witness the unity, drive and focus of like minded individuals. No prima donna's, backstabbing heroes or ball hogs. True Muskateer stuff. All for one and one for all running the great race, NOT to win, but to FINISH and ACCOMPLISH the race.

You only get relegated if your desire is relegation.

So as Louie Armstrong tooted in black and white a long time ago, "What a Wonderful World." I'll be here till I inevitably get kicked out for yelling "OFFSIDE REF!!!" during a sermon in church.

Till the cows come home and the roosters cock a doodle do, I remain invariably, and as always;

SPQR

NRC

NO TV

Tsigan United FC.

SUPER STRIKERS IN DREAM DEBUT

Villani Leads Club To Historical Victory!

Newly promoted Western Strikers took to the park for their first ever match in the FFSA Super League and the club's history, marking it with a strong 3:2 win over Campbelltown City Red Devils. In what were very blustery conditions at their home ground Carnegie Reserve, Charlie Villani's lads stood up the test of playing top level football and did their home fans proud!

Coming off their Fairmont Homes Summer Series Cup win a fortnight earlier, Rocky Aloisi's Red Devils started the game at a pace that allowed the home side to match them play for play. The debutantes held Campbelltown well in the first 15-20 minutes of the match, led from the back by club veteran defender Chris McNichol assisted by newcomer Andy Thorpe (UK), successfully holding off any advances from the Devils two prong strike force of Jason Trimboli and Michael Paleka (ex Raiders). Just before the 20th minute mark of the game against the run of play, Daniele Lastella scored the Strikers first ever Super League goal, volleying a ball that found the top left corner of the net and beating Devils keeper Les Pogliacomis sending the large home crowd into raptures. As the game unravelled, Trimboli was becoming visibly frustrated with the lack of supply from his usually reliant midfielders Nathan Fleetwood and Simon Catanzaro, who were being cleverly nullified by Villani's chargers, forcing the Devils to play a long ball game to bypass the midfield dominance. Strikers new signing Brazilian Felipe Garcia was showing his wares, commanding the midfield with his brilliant display of pace and vision, creating chances for his men up front. Red Devils Stanko Zilic and Domenic Signoriello worked overtime as did youngster Stephen Piotto, but being dispossessed too many times at crucial moments by the zealous Western Strikers and unable to score an equalizer before the half time break.

At the 58th minute mark of the match Campbelltown faltered yet again, Strikers scoring their second after a headed mistake by defender Michael Menechella gave the Strikers imposing forward Alor Boulabek the opportunity to score from inside the box, Pogliacomis beaten for the second time. Villani's men were now sending out a message loud and clear they were here to do business not just making up the numbers. Now 2-0 down, Devils coach Aloisi made a timely change, substituting striker Paleka, man-marked brilliantly by Joseph Ciarla, with ex Raider Ali Toure, the change bearing fruit as Toure scored with his first touch slipping the ball past keeper Picca. Campbelltown now looked to get a hold on the match,



Charlie Villani's jubilant Western Strikers are off to a super start in the FFSA Super League.

Toure menacing up front was denied by Picca who now took charge of his goal. The run of play by the Red Devils' seemed to inspire the Strikers to step up a gear, young Michael Russo giving his all, as did seasoned Frank Tibaldi (ex White City) with the Brazilian Garcia featuring heavily, dancing his way around the park with his silky skills leaving Aloisi's boys to do all the chasing. Garcia's hard work paid off when Campbelltown's Menechella erred for the second time, an easy ball given to him on the edge of the 18 yard box as he cleverly dummied the keeper committing him to one side of the goal and slotting the ball past him on the other. With Menechella subsequently being taken off and the scoreline at 3-1, the home side fans couldn't believe their eyes, their debut in the Super League resembling a fairy tale they could only have dreamt of, while Campbelltown were left scratching their heads as to what they could do to stop this run. With only minutes left in the match, three times Sergio Melta Winner and Devils Captain Simon Catanzaro took the matter into his own hands, scoring a beautiful header, putting his side back into the game but too late too late, referee Nelson's final whistle giving the Western Strikers their first win in their first ever game of the Super League.

Saturday night Para Hills Knights played host to the Raiders, the game ending in a 1:1 draw at the Paddocks. In what was a very entertaining game of football, the home side were put to the test by the

young Raiders side led by newly appointed and first time Senior coach John Duthie. In a classic game of two halves, the Knights took charge in the first with Matthew Muscroft breaking the deadlock on the half hour, his strike beating keeper Cody Larkin (Adel Utd Youth). Knights defender Michael Cartwright found himself opposing his former side but held the backline strongly. Raiders took charge in the second half, with backmen Todd McSorley putting in a solid performance, returning to the local competition after his stint last year with Altona Magic VPL winners, along with Carl Cook after his year away in England. In a team made up of predominantly new signings, veteran and Captain Richie Alagich led by example, equalizing in the 73rd minute with a 'Beckham-like' free kick that curled in past Knights keeper James McKee. Minutes after, the Knights were down to ten men, Mullen being sent off with his second yellow card. Raiders had settled into the latter part of the second half and were playing some good quality football. New signing Paul Mackie and Daniel Scordo were dominant, creating more chances to score from the midfield with their effective passing and great runs, coupled with Alagich and his pinpoint accurate free kicks and corners made for exciting football. Both substitutes Rhys Townsend and Craig Goodwin also had their chance so get on the scoreboard, lack of experience only getting the better of them. Raiders coach Duthie spoke of how nervous it was leading up to the game. "We worked

hard during the pre-season to get things rights with a very young side. It was an even match where they took their chances in the first half. We played better in the second half and had opportunities to take the game against 10 men. All in all, I'm very happy with the way the side played in a good entertaining game".

At Marden Sports Complex Zoran Karadzic's Adelaide Blue Eagles were put through their paces with a determined Modbury Jets taking the game right up to them, the final result being a 3:2 win to the Eagles. In a game where the Jets took the lead twice, the result was decided after a late penalty was given to the Eagles for a handball in the box by Jet Brad McKay. New coach Jason Hayhurst taking over from long time coach Duane Gray was philosophical after the match. "Despite the result I am really proud of the way the team played. We were unlucky not to take a point home. Keeper Paul Reilly had an exceptional game between the sticks. In the end we were beaten by a penalty."

The other result from Saturday night was Adelaide Galaxy going down 1:3 in their first home game to front runners MetroStars. Adelaide City will host Premier League Champions Adelaide Hills on Monday night 7.30pm at Oakden.

By Nat Adamopoulos

Photos by George Manos

THREE FROM THREE FOR MILICIC'S MEN

Weather Plays Havoc And Two Games Postponed

Ante Milicic's Sydney United made it three from three with a 1-0 win at Wollongong on Sunday evening to go two points clear in the NSW Premier League. Marconi, impressive 3-0 winners over Blacktown City, are United's closest challengers. Elsewhere, the Sydney Tigers suffered another loss, this time at the hands of Penrith-Nepean, despite the return of striking hero Robbie Younis on loan from Adelaide United.

Two of Saturday's matches, Bonnyrigg-Sydney Olympic and Manly-West Sydney Berries, were postponed due to the heavy rainstorm which lashed Sydney on Saturday evening.

Bankstown City 4-2 Sutherland Sharks

Bankstown City moved into the top five with a thrilling 4-2 win at Jensen Park over last season's premiers Sutherland.

Although the home side started the game brightly, with midfielder Shane Webb firing the first shot in anger after only three minutes, it was Sutherland who took the lead in the tenth minute. Ben Spruce's cross from deep on the left was deftly flicked on at the near post by last season's top-scorer Brad Boardman, and Panagiotis Nikas was there to fire the ball home with his left foot.

Bankstown were stirred into action, and an eye-catching move on the right involving Suad Ameti, Steve Liavas and Lebanese international Husseyn Salameh ended with the latter sending a cross-shot just

wide of Nathan Denham's goal.

Sutherland regained their ascendancy in the succeeding minutes, however, with Nathan Ralph and Boardman both going close. The away side were gradually increasing their territorial dominance, and were unlucky not to go further in front on the half-hour, when confusion in the Bankstown penalty area led to a Neil Jablonski shot being luckily deflected onto the bar by Bankstown keeper Andrew Bazi.

Although much of the running was now coming from the visiting side, Bankstown drew level on 37 minutes. Ameti's free kick from the right was met by Ibrahim Haydar at the far post, and the Sydney FC youngster sent a clever header across the goalkeeper and in at the far post.

Sutherland had a chance only a minute later, Jim Bakis's right-footed thunderbolt going just wide, but Bankstown then took an unexpected lead. James Monie's neat overhead kick was dummied by Salameh, and Webb rushed onto the ball from midfield; surging into the area, he was impeded by Michael Katz...penalty.

Salameh tucked it neatly away to the keeper's right. Richard Luksic should have sent Bankstown into the sheds 3-1 ahead, but he blazed over from point-blank range with the final kick of the half, following a set-piece.

Boardman limped off at the interval, to be replaced by young Matthew Hall, and Bankstown looked an ever more de-

termined outfit. On 51 minutes, Salameh scored a splendid goal to give his side a two-goal cushion; sweetly exchanging passes with Haydar on the left, he nipped into the area and glided a right-footed shot beyond an advancing Denham. 3-1 to the hosts.

Katz's long pass found Sutherland's substitute striker on 55 minutes, but Bazi saved expertly. On the hour, the visitors' night took another turn for the worse when left-winger Chris Price was dismissed for a second bookable offence.

Yet, strangely, Bankstown began to go into their shells following the sendoff, and Sutherland, making good use of the flanks, began to rally. Eleven minutes from the end, they ensured a tense finish when an excellent cross from Katz was thumped in at the far post by another substitute, Matthew Villazon. Bakis missed a golden chance for the equalizer six minutes later, when he sent a free kick from just outside the box well over the bar.

Hussein Akil, Bankstown's substitute for the excellent Salameh, forced Denham into a save on 86 minutes, as Bankstown began to pull themselves together. And sure enough, two minutes into added time, the muscular Luksic tore through an exhausted Sutherland midfield and released Akil in the inside-left channel: the young sub made no mistake, and ensured that the points would stay in the south-west.

FNSW RD 3 RESULTS

	G	W	D	L	F	A	G	D	P
1 Sydney United	3	3	0	0	5	0	5	9	
2 Marconi Stallions	3	2	1	0	6	1	5	7	
3 Bankstown City	3	2	0	1	5	3	2	6	
4 West Sydney Berrie	2	1	1	0	5	3	2	4	
5 Penrith Nepean Utd	3	1	1	1	3	4	-1	4	
6 Sydney Tigers	3	1	0	2	6	4	2	3	
7 Wollongong FC	3	1	0	2	3	4	-1	3	
8 Sydney Olympic	2	1	0	1	3	4	-1	3	
9 Manly United FC	2	0	2	0	1	1	0	2	
10 Sutherland Sharks	3	0	2	1	2	4	-2	2	
11 Blacktown City	3	0	1	2	0	6	-6	1	

TELECHOICE PREMIER LEAGUE: ROUND 3: FIRST GRADE: Penrith Nepean United 1 (Tayfun Buyukopru 53m) Sydney Tigers 0, Manly United FC West Sydney Berries Postponed, Bonnyrigg White Eagles Sydney Olympic Washed Out.

GRADE 20: Penrith Nepean United 1 Sydney Tigers 2, Manly United FC 2 West Sydney Berries 2, Bonnyrigg White Eagles Sydney Olympic Postponed.

GRADE 18: Penrith Nepean United 1 Sydney Tigers 1, Manly United FC 1 West Sydney Berries 1, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 2 Sydney Olympic 0.

By Mike Salter

In Sydney

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STRIKERS POUNCE ON COUGARS

With five sides locked at the top of the Hyundai QSL table on three points after Round One, every team in Round Two will be eager to produce a win to break away from the crowd.

Miners take on Redlands in their first game of the season, Strikers travelled to Rockhampton to play the Cougars and Logan United host the FNQ Bulls late Sunday. Olympic were boosted by an impressive midweek signing of a former Queensland Roar player, whilst the big match of the round sees a rematch of last year's Preliminary Final between Sunshine Coast FC and NQ Razorbacks.

Redlands City Devils 2 (Daniel Byrne 15', Russell Woodruffe 55') - Whitsunday Miners 1 (Andy Cygan 63')

The Miners took on Redlands in their first game of the season who were keen to show that a 4-0 thrashing at the hands of Olympic FC last weekend was an aberration. The home side came out and established a high tempo which payed off when Daniel Byrne scored from a good effort in the 15th minute. Redlands continued to press and were rewarded with a penalty in the 55th minute which Woodruffe coolly converted. The second half saw the tempo reduced which seemed to

allow the Miners back into the game, grabbing a goal in the 63rd minute but never truly threatening to steal the points.

Capricorn Cougars 1 (Roy Bob 11') - Brisbane Strikers 4 (Luke Morley 41', Gareth Musson 53', 66', 75')

The match in Rockhampton saw both sides attempting to take maximum points from the first two games of the season after impressive wins in Round One. Capricorn took the lead in only the 11th minute with an upset looking likely as the home side managed to keep Brisbane pinned back for the early stages. It was a sign of things to come however when Luke Morley managed to sneak a goal for the strikers just before half-time, the disappointment clear on the Cougars players. Both sides returned after the half with Brisbane immediately looking more dangerous. Gareth Musson was the beneficiary of Brisbane's improved play striking a hat-trick by the 75th minute to give Brisbane a comfortable victory.

Sunday 15th March 5pm - Queensland Academy of Sport vs Olympic FC
Queensland Academy of Sport face Olympic FC on Sunday evening. The youngsters will be hoping for a more evenly fought out clash against Bobby Hamilton's side than the

one they encountered last weekend against the Strikers, whilst Olympic will go into the game confident after the opening round 4-0 win over Redlands City Devils. Olympic will also be boosted by midweek news that former Queensland Roar player Hyuk-Su Seo will be joining the club. Coach Bobby Hamilton viewed the signing as excellent news for his team. "We're quite a young team across the park, and that's one thing we're probably lacking, just a bit of experience."

Sunday 15th March 5pm - Sunshine Coast FC vs NQ Razorbacks

NQ Razorbacks face Sunshine Coast FC for the first time these two sides have met since the Coast side prevailed 7-0 in the 2008 Hyundai QSL Preliminary Final. A NQ Razorbacks spokesperson commented that it would be different this time around. "The disappointment of losing to Sunshine Coast in the Preliminary Final is still there and with all respect to them, we are hoping we can get our pride back and Saturday is the perfect opportunity. The boys have trained really hard since December and we're buoyed by our first win last week against good opposition in Logan United."

Sunday 15th March 5pm - Logan United FC vs FNQ Bulls
Logan United and FNQ Bulls clash on Sunday afternoon and are both hoping for a win after losing 2-1 in Round 1 to NQ Razorbacks and Capricorn Cougars respectively. Logan will hope Reggie Davani will continue his form after scoring just four minutes into last week's clash and the Bulls will be keen to register their first ever Hyundai QSL victory.

BYE - Bundaberg Spirit

By Jarrod Ellis
In Brisbane

QSL STANDINGS										
	G	W	D	L	F	A	GDP			
1 Brisbane Strikers	2	2	0	0	9	2	7	6		
2 Olympic FC	1	1	0	0	4	0	4	3		
3 Sunshine Coast FC	1	1	0	0	4	0	4	3		
4 NQ Razorbacks	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3		
5 Capricorn Cougars	2	1	0	1	3	5	-2	3		
6 Redlands C Devils	2	1	0	1	2	5	-3	3		
7 FNQ Bulls	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0		
8 Logan United FC	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0		
9 Whitsunday Miners	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0		
10 Queensland AIS	1	0	0	1	1	5	-4	0		
11 Bundaberg Spirit	1	0	0	1	0	4	-4	0		

ZEBRAS RETAIN SUMMER CUP

Tilford Defeat Clarence In Southern Tassie Showpiece

Tilford Zebras retained the Summer Cup in southern Tasmania after beating Clarence United 4-3 in extra-time in a nail-biting soccer final played before a large crowd at KGV Park.

It was the third year in a row that Zebras have won the cup. A goal in the dying seconds of the second period of extra-time by Aaron Brazendale - from Ben Crosswell's pass - settled the issue. Luke Cripps had given Clarence the lead with a penalty in the 21st minute, but Brazen- dale made it 1-1 on the hour after goalkeeper Michael Moschogianis did well to keep out Dwayne Walsh's shot. Clarence restored their lead in the 70th minute when Zebras' keeper Troy Kaden fumbled Ben Hamlett's shot and Chris Hunt struck home the loose ball. Fabian Lapolla equalised 10 minutes from the end, after good play inside the box by former Clarence player Walsh, to take the match into extra-time.

A poor back-pass early in the second period of extra-time gifted Daniel Lapolla a goal to put the Zebras ahead for the first time, but Julian McMahon made it 3-3 when he turned home Hunt's cross from the left a minute later. With virtually the last action of the match, Crosswell played Brazendale through on the left with a clever back-heel and he scored with a low drive inside the far corner. Mo- schogianis got a hand to the ball but was unable to keep it out. Reigning southern Forestry Tasmania Premier League champions South Hobart resumed where they left off last season by winning their opening league match 3-0 away to University at Olinda Grove. A free-kick by Jonathon Ladic gave the



The Tilford Zebras squad which captured a third successive Southern Tasmania Summer Cup on the weekend.

visitors a 1-0 lead at the break, while Hugh Ludford and Greg Downes completed the scoring in the second half. Hobart Olympic and Clarence United drew 0-0 at South Hobart in a match of few real chances, the start of which was delayed for 10 minutes because of lightning. Clarence's Luke Cripps and Ben Parker both shot wide, while Olympic's goalkeeper, Dmitri Nester was fortunate to foil Ben Hamlett, whose close-range shot rebounded off the keeper's head. Michael Bulis, Carl Larzabal and Danijel Djekanovic squandered chances for Olympic. Glenorchy Knights scraped home 4-3 against New Town Eagles at KGV Park, the latter

hitting the woodwork three times - twice through Jacob Kavanagh and once through Chris Wass - and also conceding an own-goal, which ultimately cost Eagles the match. The Knights appeared to be cruising at half-time when they led 2-0 through goals by Josh Fielding and Amadu Koroma. But, when Eagles brought on substitutes Cormac Collins, Alex Leszczynski and Jacob Malakoff, the balance of the game changed. Collins pulled a goal back seven minutes after the interval, while a re-taken penalty by Leszczynski in the 66th minute made it 2-2. Ben Whitehall had initially won the penalty when he was pushed by Knights goalkeeper Ben Peter at a corner, but when Peter saved

Kavanagh's spot-kick, referee Craig Phillips ordered the penalty to be re-taken because of encroachment by Mynonge Kamba. Substitute James Hope restored the Knights' lead a minute later with a superb long-range strike, which took a slight deflection as it left his boot. When Matthew Rybak headed past his own goalkeeper, Andrew Savage, four minutes from the end to make it 4-2 for the Knights, the game seemed over, but a header by Chris Wass in injury time made the scoreline 4-3 and much more respectable for Eagles.

By Walter Pless
Photos by Walter Pless

CENTRAL FC CLAIMS INAUGURAL SUMMER LEAGUE

Boys Still To Fight It Out

Central FC claimed the inaugural minor premierships in the Summer League Open Women's competition last week thrashing Western FC 7-0, and edging out North Eastern FC.

North Eastern also had a big win in the second last round of the competition defeating Southern FC 6-0, with Katrina Smith starring for North East bagging a hatrick, including two from corner kicks.

With only one round to play this weekend and neither Central FC or North Eastern having a scheduled game, Central will finish on top of the premierships table just nudging out North East by one solitary point.

In the other Open Women's Summer League matches last week Eastern FC bounced back to beat South-East FC 3-0, Goulburn North-East FC notched up two wins, one over South East FC 3-0 and

one over Eastern 3-0.

In the Youth Under 18 Boys Summer League competition Southern FC will be fighting for the inaugural Summer League minor premierships when it takes on Goulburn North East FC today.

The two teams only separated by the slimmest margin of one point top of the table

It has been stellar season by the Southern FC with 12 wins, one draw and no losses so far while Goulburn North East has also been impressive with 12 wins and two losses.

Southern FC coach, Ian Williamson said he was pleased with his boys season and particularly their commitment and the commitment of their parents and the clubs which has seen his team field a strong team in each week of the competition.

Of the clash with second placed Goulburn North East he said "we are looking forward to playing them (Goulburn North East) tomorrow...and finish it off with a nice clean sweep."

"The bulk of our players are all fit and ready to go and we are looking forward to it," he said.

Northern FC and Central FC round out the top four of the Boys competition.

The ordinary round of Summer League will conclude this weekend and the FFV have announced two rounds of finals will be played next weekend for the top four teams in each league.

By Emma Field

Photos by John Punshon



PFA Australia Easter Clinics

Join UK Academy Coach (UEFA recognised) and development specialist Lee Waddington for our Easter clinics.

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EASTERN LIONS PRE-SEASON TOURNAMENT

SATURDAY 21st MARCH
11.00 AMPITCH 1 BERWICK (RES) v SANDRINGHAM (RES)
1.00 PM PITCH 2 EASTERN LIONS (RES) v SOUTHERN STARS (RES)
1.00 PM PITCH 1 BERWICK v SANDRINGHAM
3.00 PM PITCH 1 EASTERN LIONS v SOUTHERN STARS

This is a Fair Play tournament. All players and spectators are expected to enter into the spirit of the event. There is no entry fee for this tournament.

Eastern Lions SC will have food and drink available at reasonable prices during the day. The bar will also be open.

Eastern Lions Junior Soccer club is open again for the junior registrations until the end of April!

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Melway Ref: 60 J8

DONCASTER ROVERS NEWS



Across the club team finalisations are taking place as pre-season starts to get serious in the lead up to the first competition games of 2009.

Training schedules are updated regularly on the club website so please check as circumstances may change from day to day.

Most age groups are now at capacity so please email dsoccerclub@gmail.com or call 0408 686 272 if you are yet to register.

The season for Small Sided Football players is very close. SSF are our U10 and younger players and begin their season with the official launch on Saturday 21st March from 10.00am - 11.30am

In an update to our junior girls teams for 2009, we will field an U14, U15, U16 & U18 side.

A few spots remain so please call 0408 686 272 or email dsoccerclub@gmail.com with any enquiries.

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TECHNOLOGY – A GIFT FOR ALL TO BE SEEN OR A RIFT IN BETWEEN?

Football's Future Foray In The Name Of Fair Game

The 'good old days' of football may just be when decisions were made by referees, contested by players and discussed by fans.

Indeed, it is that very latter point that points to the pointless inclusion of technology in football. If all decisions are to be viewed and then reviewed, surely the poignant pleasure of discussing the 'match last night' with fellow fans will take a hit to the heart. Given, technology's inclusion may be frustrating, but surely some of the forms of technology to be included do have some 'point'.

When referees began wearing earpieces it became apparent that football is heading down the road of innovation. That is not to sound disparaging but is to merely point out the fact that the game was changing, or rather the 'running' of a game was. There was little resilience over the earpiece as compared to other options on the table.

The main reason for this was that other sports' officials were already using it, and more importantly, were benefiting from doing so. Football is forever told to take a page out of Rugby's book, for it behaves well and is run well on the field. Why not? If it can help in some decisions, and was blindingly obvious to begin with, then of course such a minor thing should be prevalent. Referees can now communicate with their assistants for... assistance (a whole different topic I know!).

Moreover, whatever is said in the earpiece is recorded and can later be reviewed, which is a very decent reason for its presence - if of course such discretions are adhered to. Earpieces are similar to black-boxes in aeroplanes whereby the verbal is recorded. However, unlike the aeroplane's, the referee's earpiece when reviewed may just disclose the reasons why thousands of fans' hopes came crashing down to earth - bad decisions were in the air! And they still are. So just how effective is an earpiece to the improvement of a referee's ability in making the right call? Not very. But are they useful? Perhaps, for logistical reasons only. Let's be honest, there cannot really be much difference in the amount of correct decisions made pre and post earpiece era. So to conclude, an earpiece is acceptable and to its credit, it has become a necessity.

When trying to keep pace with the moving world, FIFA seeks further technological aid. What can improve the game further? And here comes the most ridiculous 'allowance' which clubs could have taken up if desired - the screens in dugouts for managers to 'review' parts of play. It was a case of 'show the prosecutor the evidence, and hope he doesn't retaliate'. All will recall the infamous incident where Jose Mourinho smashed the screen in his plight to the referee's ineptitude. He saw what the referee did not, or he did not see what the referee did. Mourinho perhaps had the best view, but he did not have the 'actual' view where the referee went on a split second moment which appeared to have happened. Referee's do not have it easy, there is no doubt, but such inclusions only makes it easier to point this out - hence the screen is now not allowed in dugouts. As if Sir Alex needed anymore excuse to abuse. "Here Sir Alex", say the football governing body, "take this bat and knock us out if you wish." Evidently, the dugout screens were not meant to influence the game per se, but they were just a



Exterminate! Exterminate! The Daleks give chase in a local derby clash.

'new technology' that was there to be played with - nonsensical.

Last but not least it is the big one, and it directly involves the game. Goal-line technology; will they, won't they? Aptly, can they or can't they? Should they?

Many goals that were, perhaps should not have been allowed as the ball did not cross the line and many that weren't, perhaps should have (point to be noted - Roy Carroll conceded from Spurs' halfway line effort. Technology was not an issue here. Officials' sanity was). Moving on to other examples; did the ball really cross the line in the 1966 World Cup final? Was lowly Chesterfield denied a 1997 F.A. Cup final? It is the 'question' which goal-line technology serves to answer.

There was a time when the only technology I would be in support of was goal-line technology. However, the more I think of it, the more I think. Let's look at the advantage (s?) and the disadvantages.

For one, had goal-line technology been a common method of referral for referees then

perhaps the Germans would not be so bitter about the 1966 World Cup final. The correct decision would have been made. Moreover, Chesterfield's Jonathon Howard would have been celebrating the possibility of one of the greatest ever giant killings after his effort would have probably put Middlesbrough out of the F.A. Cup semi final. His shot was clearly over the line. Therefore, the most important thing here is that goal-line technology should make correct VITAL decisions. Had the above two examples been given correctly, then great tales would have ensued. Or is it the other way round? With all due respect to Chesterfield's viewpoint, is this not a better tale? The type of tale you recount with fans around football campfires; stuff of legend; the poignant football folklore. Surely it is the juxtaposition of the 'ifs' and 'buts' that form the body of what we affectionately call the 'beautiful game'. Paradoxically, this ugliness is what makes our game so beautiful. I agree, this is a stance of a romantic, a dreamer, but sometimes dreaming about wooing the beau-

tiful game is healthy and hearty.

The other reason why I feel that goal-line technology would not work is that very statement - HOW will it work? Let's take a scenario. Team A has a corner against Team B. The ball is delivered into the box and it is loose; players from both teams scramble to get the ball. Team A strikes a loose ball amidst the chaos and it canons off the underside of the bar. Appeals aloud from Team A. But the ball goes straight back to Team A from the rebounded crossbar, they surely look to hit the net now, it's a great chance... they... [SCENE PAUSES].

If goal-line technology is to be used, the question is 'At what point does the referee stop play?' Should he have blown or referred to the technology on video when the ball came down from the underside of the bar? If so, and the ball did not cross the line then he would have made a mistake in not allowing the advantage had Team A '... scored from the rebound'. Or he could have waited and let play have carried on which was when Team A '... missed from the rebound'. However, the replay later might have shown the initial strike did cross the line - huge error. This is an obvious and quite unhelpful flaw of goal-line video replays and the big question it adversely poses is as aforementioned, 'When does the referee stop play?' However, the emphasis now, thankfully, is more on in-ball technology for goal-line decisions whereby a chip of some sort will be placed inside the ball which will be read by some device which will in turn clearly indicate a ball's position in relation to the line. A mouthful I know, but imagine what 'full' the referee will get if this malfunctions during a game. There is that possibility. Also, just how accurate will it be? If the grey area can be made black and white, and it is MORE than one hundred percent if possible AND it is rapid and clear, then why not? But this list of demands is surely too extensive to be fully satisfied, which is why goal-line technology is perhaps best left alone.

Even when Hawkeye (who still cannot get it right, and they are the daddies of it all) is used in tennis, there is still that subconscious mind that challenges its competence. In such an environment, when the ball is out of play after a shot and there is a one on one level, technology has its place. Moreover, cricket has unfortunately gone to referrals, which is a massive put off for the implementation of technology. The referee and his position, which FIFA holds in such high esteem (remember the recent 'Get on with it' campaign) will have his integrity questioned if football is seduced by technology. No doubt, when making a decision with technology's aid, the referee will either be complimented or pilloried, but either way, he WILL be undermined.

Technology therefore is a gift which will cause a rift between 'what we know and love' and 'what is out there waiting'. Botox and facelifts are simply the same face, only shinier! They may think the same and appear the same, but when they talk, we can see the effort!

For me, football needs to treat technology tentatively.



The debate rages whether technology has a role to play in game changing football decisions on the field. The 1966 World Cup Final is a classic example where the camera and the referee didn't quite see eye to eye.

By Sukhi Randhawa

Photos by Archive

UNITED LEFT RED FACED

Quattro Basta For Juve, Hertha Hones In

ENGLAND
Liverpool breathed fresh life into the Premier League title race on Saturday after coming from a goal down to complete a stunning 4-1 defeat of Manchester United in front of a disbelieving Old Trafford crowd.

Knowing victory would effectively wrap up a third straight title, United looked to be firmly on track when Cristiano Ronaldo fired them ahead from the penalty spot.

But a rare mistake by Nemanja Vidic, whose miserable afternoon ended with a straight red card 15 minutes from time, gifted Fernando Torres an equaliser.

A Steven Gerrard penalty ensured Liverpool were ahead at the break and Fabio Aurelio's perfectly free-kick ended the contest after Vidic's professional foul on Gerrard.

Substitute Andrea Dossena then rubbed salt into the wounds in stoppage time, running on to a Jose Reina punt upfield before beating Edwin van der Sar with a deft lob.

Liverpool's performance was all the more remarkable for the handicaps they carried into the match. A calf strain deprived Benitez of Xabi Alonso and a warm-up injury to Alvaro Arbeloa necessitated a last-minute defensive reshuffle, Sami Hyypia starting at centreback with Jamie Carragher shunted into Arbeloa's berth at right-back.

As anticipated, Ferguson inserted Anderson's combativeness and Park Ji-Sung's pace into his midfield. Less expected was the promotion of Carlos Tevez at the expense of Dimitar Berbatov but the Argentinian justified his selection by instigating the move that enabled United to take the lead after 22 minutes of scrappy preliminaries.

Tevez played Park in behind the Finnish centre-back and the midfielder was also too quick for Reina, whose mistimed dive upended the Korean.

Ronaldo's spot-kick was dispatched into the goalkeeper's right-hand corner with such ferocity that even Reina, a specialist in the art of stopping penalties, was unable to get a glove on it.

The degree of comfort with which United's back four had initially neutralised the threat posed by Gerrard and Torres, and the Spaniard's grimaces at the pain emanating from his heavily strapped right ankle, also augured badly for Liverpool.

Yet within five minutes they were level, courtesy of a double lapse from Vidic, who misjudged Reina's punt, allowing it to fly over his shoulder, then allowed Torres to nip in from behind and steal the ball away.

Vidic then slipped, ensuring Torres was unchallenged as he tapped the ball past van der Sar.

WTorres's ability to unnerve the very best defenders was in evidence again four minutes later. Having nodded the ball past Vidic in the area, the Spaniard found his progress



Liverpool midfielder Steven Gerrard (left) scores a penalty against Manchester United.

blocked by his marker's arms in a manner that almost certainly merited a penalty.

Referee Alan Wiley declined but he was left with no option four minutes before the break when Patrice Evra clipped Gerrard's ankle.

Van der Sar was booked for his diversionary antics before the penalty could be taken but Gerrard was not unnerved, finding the bottom corner before celebrating by kissing the lens of a television camera.

In between the Liverpool goals, United had been in the ascendant, with Reina needing two attempts to smother a Ronaldo free-kick and Michael Carrick going close with a 25-yarder.

Ferguson's side re-established their territorial dominance after the break but an hour had elapsed before they generated a real chance, courtesy of a Michael Carrick chip that found Tevez deep in the box, albeit with his back to goal.

The flag stayed down, Tevez's control with his chest and turn were exemplary but the shot that followed was scuffed wide.

Ryan Giggs, Paul Scholes and Berbatov were all thrown into the fray but United's hopes of a comeback when Vidic, having offered Gerrard a clear run at goal, grappled the Liverpool captain to the turf.

A straight red card was the only option for Wiley and Aurelio ensured the maximum sanction was applied by dipping the resulting free-kick into the corner.

There was still time for Gerrard to blast high into the Stretford End from 12 yards but Liverpool were not to be denied their fourth.

Four days after dishing out a 4-0 thrashing of Real Madrid, the Reds came from behind to complete their biggest win at United since 1936.

With a four-point lead and a game in hand, United still look likely to go on to claim the title, but Liverpool fans will savour the considerable bragging rights attached to this win.

Meanwhile in London, Andrey Arshavin repaid a hefty chunk of his transfer fee as the Russian inspired Arsenal to an impressive 4-0 win over Blackburn on Saturday.

Arshavin capped a dazzling individual display with two goals - his first since his high-profile 15 million-pound move from Zenit St Petersburg in the winter transfer window - to kill off Rovers at the Emirates Stadium.

Arshavin's clinical edge was sorely needed for Arsenal and two late goals from Emmanuel Eboué - a close-range finish and a cool penalty - gave the scoreline some deserved polish.

A convincing win lifted Arsenal - who have not lost in the league since the end of November - back into the top four for the first time in over two months.

Across town at Craven Cottage, Andrew Johnson, Simon Davies and Diomansy Kamara scored for Fulham in a 3-1 victory over Bolton to notch up their first away Premiership win of the season and stop the rot of two consecutive defeats.

ITALY
Juventus showed no hangover from their midweek Champions League exit as they closed the gap on leaders Inter Milan to four points with a 4-1 home win over Bologna on Saturday.

Claudio Ranieri's team were knocked out of Europe after drawing 2-2 at home to Chelsea on Tuesday, seeing them beaten 3-2 on aggregate.

But goals from Hasan Salihamidzic, Sebastian Giovinco and an Alessandro Del Piero

brace saw them come back from a goal down to stun Bologna.

Inter Milan can re-establish a seven-point advantage on Sunday when they entertain Fiorentina.

In the day's other game, Ruben Oliveira scored the only goal six minutes from time as Genoa won 1-0 at Cagliari, for whom Andrea Cossu was sent off in the first half.

The win moved Genoa up to fourth place in the final Champions League qualifying position, although Fiorentina and AS Roma can both leapfrog them on Sunday.

GERMANY
Hot-shot striker Andrei Voronin scored his eighth goal in six games to keep Hertha Berlin four points clear at the top of the Bundesliga on Saturday and seal their 1-0 win over Bayer Leverkusen.

The 29-year-old is on loan from Premier League side Liverpool, but Hertha will be in no hurry to give the Ukrainian back after he followed up last week's hat-trick against Energie Cottbus with the goal which claimed three points.

There was a battle royal at Hanover as the home side drew 4-4 with Borussia Dortmund while Borussia Moechengladbach picked up their third win in four games to ease their relegation worries with a 4-2 win at Cologne.

And Karlsruhe are now three points off the pace at the foot of the table after they were beaten 1-0 at home by Arminia Bielefeld.

On Friday, Brazilian striker Grafite scored a hat-trick to help VfL Wolfsburg beat Schalke 04 4-3 to put his side up to third as the hosts remain unbeaten this season.

On Sunday, midtable Werder Bremen host VfB Stuttgart while Hamburg at home to Energie Cottbus.

After their Champions League heroics in midweek, when they sealed a 12-1 aggregate win over Sporting Lisbon, Bayern Munich are second as they had few problems beating ten-man Bochum 3-0 away from home.

SCOTLAND
Hibernian manager Mixu Paatelainen savoured his first taste of victory in the Edinburgh derby as Steven Fletcher's goal clinched a 1-0 success against Hearts on Saturday.

Fletcher turned in Alan O'Brien's cross before both sides were reduced to 10 men during more than seven minutes of first-half injury-time at Easter Road.

David Clarkson came off the bench to score the decisive goal in Motherwell's 2-1 win at home to Dundee United.

Chris Maguire gave Aberdeen their first league win since January with a 1-0 victory over a Hamilton side.

Inverness claimed a crucial 2-1 victory over Kilmarnock which took them four points clear of bottom spot and hauled Killie into the relegation mire. Rangers and Celtic were to meet in the Scottish league Cup final overnight.

SPAIN
Real Madrid bounced back from their Champions League heart-break by crushing 10-man Athletic Bilbao 5-2 on Saturday to cut Barcelona's lead at the top in Spain to just three points. Pep Guardiola's Barcelona, top of the table for most of the season, can restore their lead to six points with victory over Almeria on Sunday.

EPL STANDINGS

	P	GD	PTS
1 Manchester United	28	+33	65
2 Liverpool	29	+28	61
3 Chelsea	28	+32	58
4 Arsenal	29	+19	52
5 Aston Villa	28	+13	52
6 Everton	29	+10	48
7 West Ham United	28	+0	39
8 Wigan Athletic	29	+1	38
9 Fulham	29	+2	37
10 Manchester City	28	+9	35
11 Bolton Wanderers	29	-12	33
12 Hull City	29	-16	33
13 Tottenham Hotspur	28	+0	32
14 Sunderland	29	-9	32
15 Blackburn Rovers	29	-16	30
16 Newcastle United	29	-11	29
17 Portsmouth	28	-15	29
18 Stoke City	29	-19	29
19 Middlesbrough	29	-20	27
20 West Bromwich Albion	28	-29	22

BUNDESLIGA

	P	GD	PTS
1 Hertha BSC	24	+12	49
2 Bayern München	24	+21	45
3 Vf Wolfsburg	24	+19	45
4 Hoffenheim	24	+18	43
5 Hamburger SV	23	+0	42
6 VfB Stuttgart	23	+10	39
7 Bayer Leverkusen	24	+13	37
8 Schalke 04	24	+8	37
9 Borussia Dortmund	24	+5	34
10 Werder Bremen	23	+8	29
11 1. FC Köln	24	-8	29
12 Eintracht Frankfurt	24	-9	25
13 Hannover 96	24	-17	25
14 Arminia Bieefe	24	-12	24
15 Vf Bochum	24	-12	22
16 Borussia M'gladbach	24	-14	22
17 Energie Cottbus	23	-19	20
18 Karsruherl SC	24	-23	17

SPL STANDINGS

	P	GD	PTS
1 Celtic FC	28	+35	63
2 Rangers FC	28	+37	60
3 Heart of Midlothian	29	+1	48
4 Aberdeen FC	29	+4	43
5 Dundee United FC	29	+2	43

SERIE A STANDINGS

	P	GD	PTS
1 Inter Milan	27	+28	63
2 Juventus	28	+25	59
3 AC Milan	27	+19	51
4 Genoa	28	+10	48
5 Fiorentina	27	+11	46
6 AS Roma	27	+6	45
7 Lazio Roma	27	+2	41
8 Cagliari	28	+4	39
9 Palermo	27	-1	39
10 Atalanta	27	+0	36
11 Napoli	27	+0	35
12 Udinese	27	-1	35
13 Catania	27	-5	33
14 Sampdoria	27	-7	32
15 Siena	27	-4	31
16 Bologna	28	-15	26
17 Torino	27	-15	24
18 Chievo Verona	27	-15	24
19 Lecce	27	-19	23
20 Reggina	27	-23	19

By Julius Ross
Photos by Soccer Way

Sir Alex Ferguson

The Greatest British Manager Of All Time?

A mistake by Ryan Taylor lets in Manchester United to score their forty-eighth goal of this years campaign.

United hold on to beat Newcastle by two goals to one, putting themselves seven points clear of both Liverpool and Chelsea with a game in hand over both. The league looks very much like it will be heading to Manchester again this season, for an eleventh time since the Premier League's beginnings in 1992. And one man has masterminded them all. Sir Alex Ferguson. So is he the greatest manager Britain has ever seen?

Already this season Manchester United have won both the FIFA Club World Cup and the English League Cup, are among the favourites in both the UEFA Champions League and the FA Cup, and are leading the English Premiership by seven points. It is possible that at the end of this season Sir Alex Ferguson will have five more trophies to add to his already crowded mantelpiece.

Quite simply Ferguson is the most successful manager in British football history. He has won over forty trophies during his career including ten Premier League titles, five FA cups and two Champions League titles. That is more than other greats such as Herbert Chapman, Bill Shankly, Brian Clough, Bob Paisley and Sir Matt Busby. Considerably more. However it is not just his unerring eye for titles which leads many people to believe he is the greatest ever.

Ferguson first came onto the world radar whilst managing Aberdeen. The successes of Aberdeen provided perhaps the most obvious and undisputable evidence of Ferguson's greatness. Whilst at the club he won ten trophies including three league titles and the UEFA Cup Winners Cup. He successfully broke Glasgow's (via Rangers and Celtic) fifteen year hold on the title; a feat which has yet to be repeated since. After his continuing success at the club Ferguson was offered the job at Manchester United.

The first few years at United were not among Ferguson's greatest; in fact he came within a game of being sacked (or so the story goes). However after some astute signings such as Steve Bruce, Paul Ince and Gary Pallister, as well as the welcoming back of Mark Hughes from abroad, the early nineties United team began to take



Another bit of silverware to add to the collection: Sir Alex holds aloft trophy number 43 in a long and illustrious managerial career.

shape. And then they started to win.

It is under Ferguson's tutelage that United have become a winning machine. After winning their first League title there was simply no stopping them. Since the early nineties, United have not only challenged for, but have been among the favourites for, every major honour in English club football.

In Champions League terms, much like in the League, United struggled at first.

The forced absence of English teams from the European Cup competition meant that when Ferguson (along with teams like Blackburn) forayed into the Champions League for the first time they were sometimes embarrassingly outclassed. However Ferguson, with perhaps the strongest squad he has ever had, finally won the trophy in 1999. He has since added to this success by beating Chelsea in the 2008 final.

During his time at United Ferguson has

had three main United squads; the early to mid-nineties, the late nineties to early two thousands, and his current squad. Two of which have won the European Cup, and all of which have won both the League and the FA Cup. His only true comparison in the League at the moment, Arsene Wenger, has achieved similar in that he has won the League with two different squads. However, Wenger has been unable to win back to back titles, and has no European success. Jose Mourinho did at Chelsea, yet he has not been able to rebuild a squad in the way Ferguson has.

With no parallels in this age, one should look back to older managers. Take away the emotion surrounding Sir Matt Busby and one can see that he simply did not achieve what Ferguson has. Brian Clough managed to take a smaller club to become European Champions, but he has not sustained success. Bob Paisley had more European success, yet he took over an already great team, and he also found it difficult to compete on all fronts in the same way Sir Alex has been able to.

And so this is my case for Sir Alex to be considered the greatest. No other manager has had the same sustained success that he has. No other manager has been able to rebuild his squad again and again to renew their, at times, relentless attack on silverware.

Of course, it could be said that United have been able to buy the players to make them successful. And that is true. But the point is that it is through their own successes that they have been able to become arguably the biggest and richest club in the world. And also one would be forgetting about the players like Butt, Giggs, Scholes, the Neville's and of course the future Sir David Beckham, all of which were coaxed through the youth teams at United into the first team by Ferguson.

Ultimately, there is no field by which we can judge a football manager in which Sir Alex Ferguson has not excelled himself. At this moment United are League Champions, they are European Champions, and they are World Champions. And sitting on top of all this success is one man, viciously chewing his chewing gum with his face getting redder and redder by the minute.

By Adam North

Photo by MUFC

Sir Fergie's Honours

St Mirran

Scottish First Division: 1977

Aberdeen

Scottish Premier Division: 1980, 1984, 1985

Scottish Cup: 1982, 1983, 1984, 1986

Scottish League Cup: 1986

UEFA Cup Winners Cup: 1983

UEFA Super Cup: 1983

Manchester United

Premier League: 1993, 1994, 1996, 1997, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2003, 2007, 2008

FA Cup: 1990, 1994, 1996, 1999, 2004

League Cup: 1992, 2006, 2009

FA Community Shield: 1990*, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1997, 2003, 2007, 2008

UEFA Champions League: 1999, 2008

UEFA Cup Winners Cup: 1991

UEFA Super Cup: 1991

Intercontinental Cup: 1999

FIFA Club World Cup: 2008



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FACING THE CONSEQUENCES

Anfield's Yearn For Title Return Continues...

Football is like life. There are laws. Not just of the red and yellow card type but natural laws.

The law of gravity applies to football. What goes up comes down. West Bromwich Albion's inevitable slide back from whence they came after just one season in the EPL is testimony to that law.

Then there is the law that governs all football fans. The law of expectation. This law dictates that a fan's happiness is in direct correlation to whether our team surpasses or dips below our expectations.

In the case of Liverpool Football Club the expectations are clear. Win their first championship since 1989-90. In the light of Saturday's 4-1 thrashing of Manchester United, Liverpool lie 4 points adrift of the reigning champions.

The question is, after their fantastic week, how close are the Anfield faithful to seeing their 18th title under Rafael Benitez?

Their points tally is greater now than at this stage last year and they have lost only twice in the league all season, remaining unbeaten against clubs in the top six. Yet this probably won't be enough. The problem is that despite their first home loss of the season Manchester United can open up a 7 point lead if they win their game in hand, nipping the challenge of Liverpool in the bud.

On December 28th it all looked so different. Liverpool crushed Newcastle 5-1 to open up a 3-point gap on Chelsea, with a 10 point cushion on Man Utd having played three games more.

Fast forward 2 ½ months and though the past week has put a smile back on the red half of Merseyside is anyone willing to bet that United's defeat – aided by Nemanja Vidic's red card – was nothing more than a blip?

That leaves Liverpool with only the UCL as their one realistic goal this season. Perhaps because of this Benitez hasn't been immune from criticism this season, with open questioning of his transfer policy.

The Daily Mail writer James Lawton reported a strong rumour that Benitez didn't really want summer arrival Robbie Keane, that he was allegedly forced upon him by Rick Parry. Given the role call of discarded strikers at Liverpool under Benitez the theory is shaky at best. For every Fernando Torres that Benitez has signed there is a Peter Crouch, Craig Bellamy, Robbie Fowler, Fernando Morientes and Robbie Keane. Strikers are his playthings and Torres aside he seems to get bored with them.

There are also doubts about his ability to manage the team to a 38 game league title in a foreign country. He was well known at Valencia for fostering a defensive culture. If they went 1-0 ahead the game was over. But England is not Spain and Liverpool isn't Valencia, where he at least had the playmaking skills of Pablo Aimar to create something in tight games. At Liverpool he's increasingly had to defend himself against a hostile media corps, made up mainly of ex-players who act as pundits on TV shows. Paul Merson, the ex-Arsenal player, was one of those a few weeks ago expressing doubts that Benitez 'has what it takes' to win the league

in England.

For his part Benitez, not one to miss a media opportunity to big himself up when he has the upper hand, used the superb win over Real Madrid to call for stability at Liverpool. His words were a warning to the owners to preserve his as manager and give him the contract he wants. Like most things he does, this is a calculated move by Benitez, coming when his stock amongst the fans is at its highest.

He hasn't been shy in using his influence on the co-owners, George Gillette and Tom Hicks, to help oust Rick Parry from his job as chief executive at the end of this season. Parry is in essence Benitez's boss, overseeing transfers. It was Parry who was reported to have not been willing to pay in excess of £17m for Gareth Barry.

Parry had good cause to interject. In Benitez's reign there has been a revolving door of players he has bought and discarded. It hardly inspired confidence in Parry that Benitez was desperate to sign then Manchester United left-back Gabriel Heinze, whose form for Real Madrid over the two legs must have had the Liverpool boss breathing a sigh of relief that the coup failed.

His transfer policy has contributed to the lack of a title challenge. If Benitez so badly wants stability at Liverpool perhaps he should start with buying players he wants to keep for more than a season or two.

During his reign Liverpool has one European cup and an FA cup (I'm not counting charity shield and European super cup wins as they are not in my eyes major trophies) – both won on penalties – to show from his four full seasons.

So given two major trophies in four years why has Rafa got seemingly bullet-proof job security?

In two words boardroom politics. The unpopularity of the owners amongst fans and Benitez's own status are polar opposites. Both co-owners would gladly sell their stake to the Kuwaiti businessmen they are currently in talks with.

'He was well known at Valencia for fostering a defensive culture. If they went 1-0 ahead the game was over. But England is not Spain and Liverpool isn't Valencia'

The ownership issue does not distract the fans from Liverpool's failure to sustain a title challenge. Next year Arsenal will surely improve and perhaps have fewer injuries to contend with, making it even harder for the reds. The question remains why are Liverpool trailing United when they perform so well against the big clubs.

Rafa will point to the injuries to Gerrard and Torres but injuries are like rain in England, you know it's going to happen you just don't know when. Champions ride out adversity, becoming stronger for it. That is why top four clubs like Liverpool are supposed to have a deep squad to call on, to replace injured stars.

Herein lays Liverpool's problem. The squad lack quality in depth. The Liverpool bench



Super against Madrid one week, frustrating against Stoke the next. Rafa's Reds draw bores might ultimately prove costly in the quest to end Liverpool's 18 year EPL title drought.

against Real Madrid was almost unrecognisable for such a huge club.

Diego Cavalieri, Andrea Dossena, Sami Hysya, Martin Kelly, Lucas Leiva, David Ngog, Jay Sparring

Just as well they were winning when Benitez made his substitutions. Can you imagine any of those guys making a difference in the game? No matter how much he disliked Robbie Keane, surely he was a better attacking option than Ngog and Sparring?

As for injuries, I didn't hear the injury excuse when Liverpool beat Manchester United at Anfield in September sans their two best players, who were on the bench. It is true that Torres has been missing for significant portions of the season but in the six games in which they have dropped points at home Gerrard and Torres missed only 2 games each. However, a telling figure is that they started only two of those together, against Everton and Stoke. Given Torres injury concerns maybe Rafa should strengthen the squad next season with a striker that he'll stick with for longer than six months.

That's if he'll be there. To date he hasn't signed a new contract. One of his concerns was the role of Rick Parry in transfer affairs. Now the only sticking point appears to be getting the American owners to agree that he should have full control over transfer policy.

My money is on Rafa getting his way. He still enjoys the bulk of support from fans and while they are in the UCL they remain a tough team to beat. Yet it is this very success that sheds light on why I feel Liverpool won't win the league under Benitez.

True, they are hard to beat having lost just twice this season in the domestic league and

gone unbeaten in the UCL. Yet the league is a different animal. The smaller teams in England sit back and defend against Liverpool so they cannot play their favoured counter-attacking game.

The empathic win over Real last Wednesday is in contrast to their home form in the league which has seen them drop points to Stoke, Fulham, West Ham (all 0-0 bore draws), Everton, Man City (both 1-1) and Hull City (2-2). This is the real reason they won't win the league this season.

So what does the future hold for Liverpool? More of the same unless they:

- 1) Change the formation, the 4-4-1-1 formation is great in Europe and away from home in England but lacks dynamism at home.
- 2) Change personnel by acquiring creative players that can change a game and turn draws into wins, ones that add depth to the squad.
- 3) Change manager. Some say he has he taken them as far as he can.

None of these is likely until the off season so though Liverpool are closer to Man Utd than last year in terms of points they still haven't met the great expectations of league success and one wonders if under Benitez they ever will.

STATS FROM LIVERPOOLFC.TV

By Leroy Jerome Robinson

Photo by Soccer Way

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TONY OULIARIS

HEIDELBERG UNITED WARRIORS FC

goal!
W e e k l y
FOOTBALL FOCUS



Photo by Daniel Filis

FULL NAME: Anthony Ouliaris
BIRTHPLACE: Australia
BIRTH DATE: 7/7/80
HEIGHT: 181 cm
WEIGHT: 78 kg
MARRIED: Don't be silly
CAR: 1991 Mercedes
OCCUPATION OUTSIDE OF FOOTBALL:
Panel beater..... Oh, outside of football.
Concreter
NICKNAME: Ouliari
PREVIOUS CLUBS:
Whittlesea Stallions, Carlton
REPRESENTATIVE HONOURS:
State team 2006-2008
CHILDHOOD FOOTBALL HERO:
Paulo Di Canio
FAVOURITE O/S PLAYER: Cesc Fabrigas
FAVOURITE VPL PLAYER: Andy Vlahos
FAVOURITE FORMER SOCCEROO:
Charlie Yankos
FAVOURITE CURRENT SOCCEROO:
Matt Simon
MOST MEMORABLE MATCH AS A
PLAYER: Last year don't remember who
we played but on that day I landed a 350/1
multi. BANG!
MOST MEMORABLE MATCH AS A FAN:
Heidelberg V Richmond (got sent off in the
3rd minute)
MOST MEMORABLE GOAL YOU'VE
SCORED: Too many to mention
EARLIEST FOOTBALL MEMORY:
Watching Dean Fak play in the VPL when I
was 4 (give a young kid a go!)
FUNNIEST MOMENT IN FOOTBALL:
Andy Vargas' wig
BIGGEST DISAPPOINTMENT: Not making
an appearance for the national team (every-
one else has)
WORST INJURY: Knee reconstruction,
Osteitis pubis
MOST DIFFICULT OPPONENT: Amir Armeti
FAVOURITE AWAY GROUND:
Epping Stadium
SUPERSTITIONS: None
TYPICAL MATCH DAY MEAL: Subway
WHAT ARE YOUR STRENGTHS:
Blistering speed
WHAT ARE YOUR WEAKNESSES:
Everything else
FAVOURITE TEAM WHEN GROWING UP:
Arsenal
FAVOURITE OTHER SPORTS:
Love all sports
FAVOURITE OTHER SPORTSPERSON:
John Daley (legend)
FAVOURITE FOODS: All foods
FAVOURITE ACTOR/ACTRESS: Jim Carey
HOBBIES: Surfing
FAVOURITE HOLIDAY RESORT:
Anywhere there is surf and sun
FAVOURITE NIGHTSPOT:
Lady Lux (Sydney)
IDEAL DATE: Lara Bingle
FAVOURITE TV SHOWS: Acropolis Now
FAVOURITE MUSIC: Electro House
FAVOURITE FILM:
Ace Ventura Pet Detective
LAST SOCCER SHIRT YOU BOUGHT:
Arsenal
FUNNIEST RUMOUR YOU'VE HEARD
ABOUT YOURSELF: None
BIGGEST INFLUENCE ON CAREER: Nick
Marinos (it went downhill once I met him)
BIGGEST DRAG IN SOCCER:
Getting injured
FOOTBALL AMBITION: Ambition is just an
excuse for not having the guts to be lazy
WHICH PERSON IN THE WORLD WOULD
YOU MOST LIKE TO MEET? :
The flea papoutsi
YOUR TIP FOR THIS YEAR'S VPL:
Bergers v Gully final



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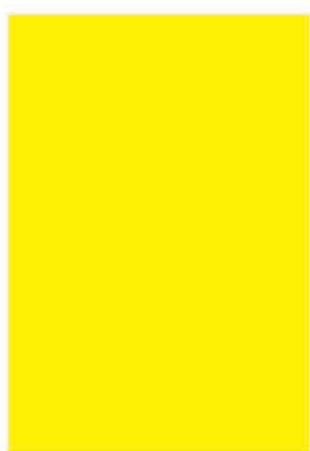
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